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COVER: 'The Blizzard'. Oil on canvas by Inglis Sheldon-Williams, 1916. From the collection of the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, gift of Mr Norman Mackenzie.

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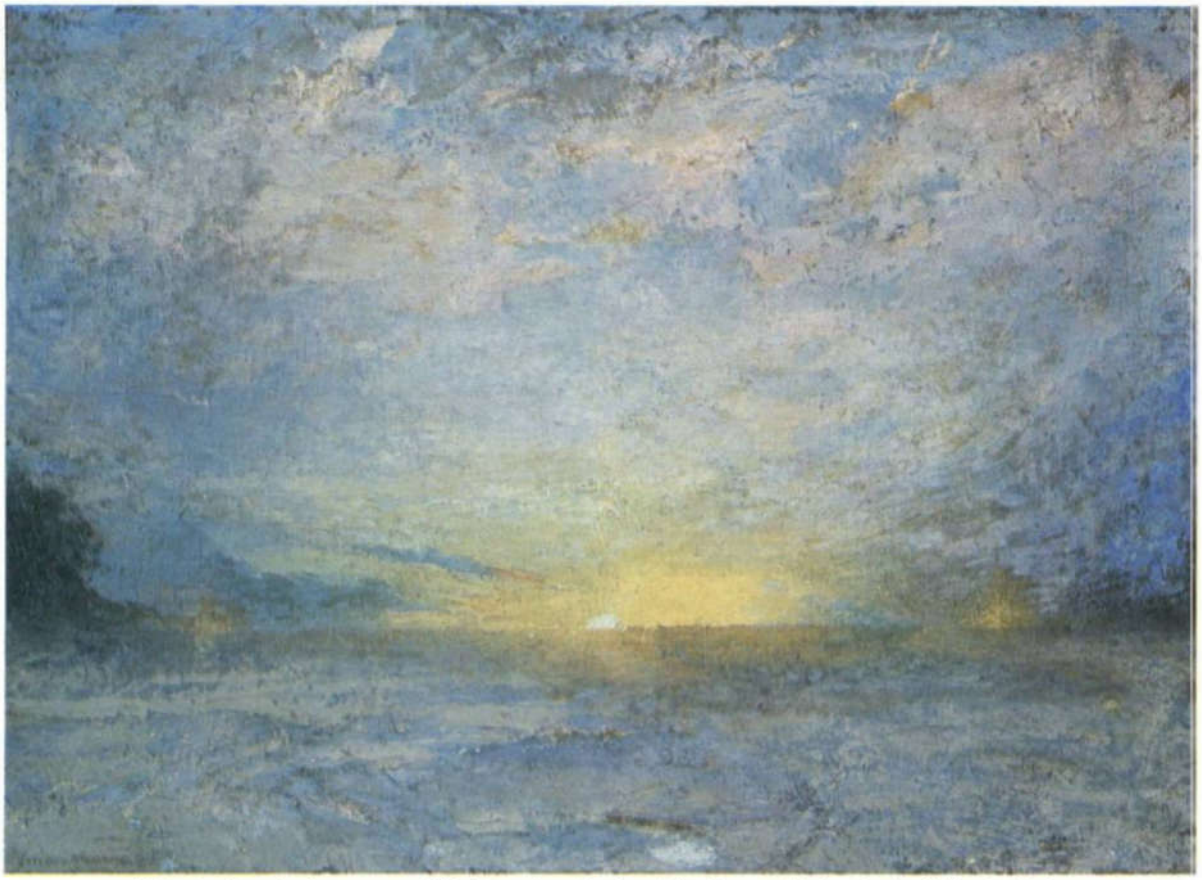

'After the Storm', oil on canvas, 1914. From the collection of the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina.

Don Hall

'Indian Encampment', oil on canvas, 1913. From the collection of the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery.

INGLIS SHELDON-WILLIAMS
Pioneer Artist of the Prairies

By Ruth Humphrys

PART I OF A TWO-PART ARTICLE

The author has researched and written several articles on the Cannington Manor settlement in Assiniboia where the Humphrys family settled in 1888. Paintings, sketches and extracts from the diary of Inglis Sheldon-Williams are reproduced by kind permission of Mrs C. N. Singer and Miss Eve Sheldon-Williams, daughters of Inglis Sheldon-Williams.

THE TRAIN came to a stop and the crew and passengers piled out to see what the trouble was this time. In 1887 unannounced stops on the recently completed Canadian Pacific Railway were frequent and expected. Although it was April, there had already been several delays, one of twenty-four hours, because of snow on the tracks. Now the travellers learned that a section of a long horseshoe bend of wooden trestle across a canyon had given way and a breakdown gang was working around the clock to make repairs. Hurricane lamps moved in the darkness and there was the thudding of sledges driving the spikes into the rail ties.

The scene was a dramatic introduction to Canada for a group of young immigrants newly arrived from England, eager for adventure and longing for something different and better than they had known.

Among them was a young boy, Henry Inglis Godrell Sheldon-Williams, who was destined to become one of the best known painters of homesteading days in the Canadian West. He stood with the brakeman watching the scene and listening. Foremen were deliberating with the train crew; orders were being shouted as beams of timber were lifted clear of the track and flung aside. Some men took a brief respite, pulled off their rough gauntlets and shook the snow from the woollen mitts inside. One of them tramped along the tracks to where the brakeman and the boy were standing. Inglis wrote:

'The man wore a fur cap worn in places down to the smooth skin, with ear flaps tied under his chin. A long scarf was twisted round his neck, carried under the armpits, and tied about his waist over a fringed rawhide tunic, after the old Indian fashion. Over nondescript weather-stained leggings hung with lumps of ice he was wearing thick bright-coloured woollen stockings up to the knees and at each step his moccasins squeaked in the crisp snow. "Where are you dumping this lot, Mac?" he asked. "Winnipeg, I guess," replied the brakeman. "Are we going across?" "It's up to the foreman. It ain't rightly finished yet." He spat and glanced at me. "Dad sending you west to grow up with the country, sonny? How did you leave Maw in little old England?' He didn't wait for an answer. "How old are you?" "Sixteen." "————————" he said dispassionately. "Well, be good! Take care of your greenhorns, Mac!" He tramped off.

'Presently the locomotive started a defiant trumpeting, a column of steam shot up in the frozen air, and to the tolling of the engine's bell the train began to move. The passengers hung from the platform of the car to watch. "There's one thing, sure, boys," said the brakeman. "If the loco gets across, we will".'

To the cheers of the passengers and the ominous creaking of the newly erected timbers they got across the untried trestle and, in due time, to the untried land to their various destinations.

Inglis had crossed the Atlantic on board the *Parisian,* pride of the old Allan Line. His widowed mother had managed only 'Intermediate' accommodation for him, a class mid-way between 'Saloon' and 'Steerage', where he ate and slept in a ten-foot square cabin with nine other young men. '. . . worse than today's third-class,' he wrote later and recalled a sign which hung from the oil lamp: "Gentlemen will not, others must not, get into bed with their boots on.' The steerage was in the hold and when weather permitted the hatches were opened to let the air in, and, equally important, out. Then the more fortunate travellers on the upper decks gathered to watch their fellow passengers below line up at the cookhouse with tin plates and bowls to be served their ration. 'It all looked like Dickens' description of Martin Chuzzlewit on his voyage to America' he recalled.

It was not the first journey abroad for Inglis. His 'gentleman farmer' father, Alfred, had died in 1880

leaving his widow Harriet with little money and six children under twelve, but she was a resourceful woman and was determined that her family should have a broad and classical education. Up until their father's death they had been educated for the most part by governesses. Now Harriet decided to move them to Karlsruhe in Germany and enrol them in German schools. To finance this undertaking she had found for herself appointments as special correspondent to two London periodicals, one of which was the *Queen*. The family stayed in Germany for more than two years, and when their mother deemed them reasonably fluent in the language she moved them to Ghent in Belgium. The economic pressure was severe, and for a time Inglis worked for a blacksmith, but along with this humble trade he learned to speak French. He rejoiced in the opportunity to study the old architecture and antiquities, to visit the art galleries and churches, and to further his knowledge of great art. Painting was in the family's blood. His grandfather had specialized in seascapes and had been a court painter to Queen Adelaide, consort of William IV. His father was a recognized painter of animals and sporting subjects and was listed in Bryan's *Encyclopedia of Painters*. Inglis and his brother, Ralf, were both showing considerable ability and interest in sketching.

The years in Europe were well spent. In 1883 when Harriet brought her children back to England, Inglis was prepared to enter the well-known Merchant Taylors' Public School which taught the virtues of hard work to the sons of impoverished gentry. Here he studied classical languages, but money was still a problem, and he contributed to his education by making horseshoes in an English 'smithy', and he spent at least one summer working on a farm. When he was graduated from the Upper Fifth he won the coveted 'Form Prize'.

Inglis Sheldon-Williams, 1874, in a portrait that suggests that his interest in horses was present from his earliest years. Collection of Mrs C. N. Singer.

This series of sketches was done by the artist probably at the age of 17 during his first winter at Cannington Manor, 1887-88. From the 'Daily Graphic' 26 February 1890.

'Behold the bachelor!' wrote Sheldon-Williams, 'resting, after his day's work, with his dog and his gun and his axe — a Robinson Crusoe-like group.'

So the student of the classics, the erstwhile blacksmith, the boy who wanted to be a painter, was now declared by his mother ready to set out on his own for a pioneer's life in Canada.

His first job was with a farmer at Brandon, Manitoba, where he worked as a hired man for five dollars a month and bed and board. Inglis grew up that summer. He learned how to handle a plough and a team of oxen as he broke the land, 'breathing words that very likely, would have shocked my loving mother'. He found out there was a technique to milking the frisky heifer and a knack to securing a hind leg to the stall post so that she could not kick over the milk pail. The raising of a stable and its attendant gathering of neighbours with their good-humoured bantering and story-swapping was a joyful occasion

'Suddenly his solitude is broken by the arrival of a crowd of uninvited guests; they have descended upon him unawares.'

'Square dances are mostly in favour, the limited accommodation of a bachelor's establishment not permitting promiscuous gyration.'

'They enter, willy-nilly, and "fix-up" his house for dancing; the ladies prepare the refreshments, and the ball begins.'

'When everyone is tired out with fun and frolic, everybody goes, and the host comes in for the cakes and ale which are not disposed of — a legacy which he deserves — for he has to replace his household goods by himself.'

which the plagues of mosquitoes, the burnt rice pudding (forgotten by the cleric in charge of watching rice puddings) and the long day's hard work did nothing to dispel. When he hauled and stacked the hay he wrote of its heady fragrance on the prairie air and when he stooked the wheat sheaves his keen artist's eye remarked the straight lanes of stooks standing firm in the stubble. In his spare moments he filled the woodbox, baked bread and bannock, and still found time to 'discover Kipling' and record his adventure in diary and sketch-book and long letters to his mother.

It was Harriet Sheldon-Williams's intention to bring her two daughters and join Inglis in the Northwest the following spring. For some reason, Ralf, her eldest son who had come to Winnipeg the preceding year, refused to support her enterprise so it fell to Inglis who 'felt I knew all about it', to be responsible for his mother.

Among his new acquaintances were two sons of a Norfolk clergyman, Henry and Sydney Brockman of Cannington Manor in what is now south-east Saskatchewan. The social advantages of this unique community were well known, and the idea of establishing his mother and sisters in a desirable area where they would find their neighbours to be 'gentlefolk' like themselves seemed an eminently sensible one. Accordingly, Inglis took the first two practical steps in realizing his plan. He went to work for Sydney Brockman and he made application for land in his mother's name, as being under eighteen he could not apply himself. In exchange for his labour, he was to receive his bed ('the hayloft with fireflies') and board and his employer would cut and haul for him

Don Hall

'Indian Overlooking Valley', oil on canvas, 1914. From the collection of the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery.

from Moose Mountain four miles away, eighty good logs to build what would eventually be the stable, but which would be the Sheldon-Williams's living quarters the following summer while their house was being built.

The Brockman brothers knew something about building. It was their boast that they had built their shack in a day. Inglis was impressed and made a note of the procedure even though his own projects were somewhat more ambitious.

First a hole was dug, six feet deep and about six feet square, and around this they set up poplar poles to enclose a space about ten by sixteen feet. The poles along one side were shorter than the other to allow for a sloping roof carried by more poplar poles. This framework was closed in with rough boards in which were left openings for a door and window. The same type of boards laid on heavier poles made the floor over the cellar with a trap door and a ladder of poplar poles for access. The outside was covered with tar paper held down by laths. A hole in the roof was cut for the stove chimney to pass through a sheet of tin. When the window sash was put in and the door hung the shanty was declared finished. Later the earth from the cellar was packed around the foundation to make "all snug". The snow drift which formed inside the door helped to keep out the wind.

After establishing himself with the Brockmans, Inglis chose his site 'in a park-like place of lakes abounding in all manner of wildfowl, rolling ridges crowned with poplar and willow groves and pleasant open spaces for building and cultivation.' He was successful in getting a homestead in his mother's name and the adjacent property held until he could qualify legally for it on his eighteenth birthday. Thus, with pre-emption of adjacent land, the family eventually acquired a whole section, 640 acres.

During the first long severe winter the short days were comparatively easy and except for the daily chores, and the hauling of firewood and the logs for the stable, there was time to visit one's neighbours. If a storm blew up or the hour grew late one stayed the night. Blankets were hung to form cubicles in the living room and the single half-storey bedroom above. The guest nearest the fire kept it going or relit it in the morning. Breakfasts were enormous: a dozen fried eggs, thick slices of pork, fried potatoes, steaks, cream, baking powder biscuits, and granite mugs of tea. Afterwards, everyone was expected to help clear up before 'hitching up' for the drive across the creaking snow to one's own shanty and morning chores.

Many years later in England, Inglis recalled his early days in Canada. 'I was never disturbed by questions of profit or loss, or whether I was suited to the life. I lived in the atmosphere of Virgil's *Georgics* that, without my knowing it, shut me off from all but a very few of my kind. To the tough settler I was a dreamer, and in the eyes of the lazy remittance man, an unsociable toiler. I found myself expert with the ax and I enjoyed a reputation for physical strength and knew by nature the knack of handling and loading the heaviest logs of green timber. At seventeen years of age the relative value of all such things never occurred to me. I rejoiced in the open life, the beauty of great expanses under the always changing conditions, the storm-clouds, the sunsets, the importunate stillnesses of night.'

In retrospect, he heard the impromptu sing-songs, the twang of the banjo accompaniment and the light clatter of real china cups. He always felt a lump in his throat when he remembered 'poor old Blagden, lost in a blizzard and frozen to death within a stone throw of his home'. Inglis knew full well how his neighbour must have felt; he had been lost himself in a lashing storm and had struggled to pull his oxen in the wrong direction, but they, stronger and instinctively wiser, found the trail again and led him safely home.

In the spring of 1888 Inglis built his stable. Soon after its completion his mother Harriet, and his sisters Dorothea and Catherine, aged fifteen and nineteen, arrived to take up residence, thereby dislodging the pony to a picket rope and the cattle to a hastily built corral.

Harriet Sheldon-Williams soon became known in the area as a strong-minded individualist, quick to express her decided opinions. She was an unconventional mother who had always allowed her children to go barefoot and her daughters to wear short hair if they chose, but she was a serious and ambitious farmer who worked hard, drove the oxen and tilled the land. She has been given credit as being the first person to import sheep into the Cannington Manor area, with what success is not recorded. One writer described her as a woman 'of the unconscious good breeding that comes from generations of responsibility and the authority of landed gentlefolk.' The girls and their mother appear to have adapted to the change in their living circumstances with easy good humour and an appreciation of adventure. One night when a skunk came into the stable and 'strolled about on one of the girls she kept still with remarkable self-control until it wandered off. Altogether, we spent a very pleasant summer camping.' Their house, which they named 'Woodside' after their home in Surrey, was completed as planned and by late autumn they moved into it, no doubt quite happy to relinquish the stable to its rightful occupants.

Inglis described their life in Cannington Manor as 'a mixture of intellectual stimulation and hard physical labour'. They belonged to the industrious, serious fraternity rather than the carefree racing set, although they enjoyed all the amenities the community had to offer and were complacently aware that they were part of a group which was founding 'a proud outpost of all the social, architectural and artistic traditions of English society'.

Much effort was made to maintain the standards of 'back home'. Formal calls were paid and returned. Fine linen, delicate china and silver were used on these occasions, and a neighbour remembered that

Saskatchewan Archives Photograph

This photograph of Cannington Manor pioneers was taken in 1890, shortly before the death of Mrs Sheldon-Williams. She is seated in the second row of ladies, second from the left. Her daughter Catherine is to the right and Dorothea is seated in front of her mother.

Dorothea Sheldon-Williams poured tea from a silver pot that had been in the family so long that Mendelssohn had had a cup from it. The incongruity of their mode of living amused Inglis when he recalled certain social occasions: 'a dinner party where grace was said, a university M. A. pausing in a discussion as to the relative virtues of this or that grove of timber for pickets or fence rails to murmur a "Benedictus". After a dance 'when returning at three or four o'clock in the morning it was a simpler business to do the chores and milk the cows in dress clothes and "boiled shirt" than to go to bed at once and turn out again a couple of hours later.' There were concerts and picnics and skating parties; there was an annual race meeting which attracted touts from as far off as the two Dakotas, and the card club 'frowned on by our Church of England chaplain who drew the line at ten-cent ante'. There were cricket and tennis matches, and of course, The Hunt. A well-trained choir sang in the little log church where the Anglican services were looked upon by some of the Canadians as savouring of papistry. 'If we did nothing else' Inglis wrote, 'we contributed a piquant chapter to the literature of pioneering.'

It was a short chapter for Harriet. At fifty-six years of age, three years and six months after her arrival in Canada, she died. She was buried in the cemetery of All Saints' Church in Cannington Manor under a stone to her memory for which her family chose from Proverbs, 'Her children arise up and call her blessed.' Inglis, with uncharacteristic brevity, wrote in his memoirs, '1891, my mother dies. The end of a grand matriarchal enterprise.'

Harriet left the farm to Inglis, but his enthusiasm for the pioneer life appeared to be waning, and his outlook had changed. He had spent more than four hard years working the land and establishing a homestead. Perhaps there was not the same purpose and hope without his dynamic mother's zeal, but he was restless and unsure. He had learned by experience what the practised settler knew at once: it was not economic to own a farm forty miles from the railroad. There was no road, just a track formed by wagon wheels and sleigh runners. All supplies were brought in by teams of oxen or horses. The difficult trip was made more arduous by the infamous Big and Little Pipestone creeks which had to be crossed, and if the loads were heavy, teamsters had to travel together in order to double up their teams to do battle with the steep banks. A fast-walking pair of oxen could make the round trip in three days. In summer the settlers camped on the prairie; in winter farmers along the route put them up, sometimes on the floor, and were entitled to charge a small fee for house and stable accommodation. There were no farmers' associations in those days and if the farmer did not like the price when he hauled his wheat

or other products to the market, he could take what was offered or haul his load back home. The extra cost of freighting offset the 'free' homesteads. For ten shillings an acre farms could be bought from the Canadian Pacific Railway whose land grants were within easy distance of the railway towns, and Inglis, and no doubt others, must have wished they had been able to pay the price, or been shrewd enough to have seen the advantages in so doing. There was a dream of a railway line to come, but branch lines tended to avoid natural obstacles and the Moose Mountain ran north and south, precluding the likelihood of any line coming within ten miles of Cannington Manor. Inglis was gentle with Captain E. M. Pierce who chose the site of the village:

> . . . how beautiful the country must have seemed to him, when after travelling by wagon across a flat trackless plain for some three hundred miles from the rail-head, he and his family came in sight of its low, wooded hills, its lakes and smiling uplands, the air alive with wild geese, mallard, teal and snipe. It blinded him to reality as it blinded all of us who followed him.

Harriet's death opened his eyes to reality. His energies and creativity found expression in his paint-box rather than his fields and stock. Increasingly, he felt 'the urge to be a painter at all costs' and he made his decision to return to England to study art. He first had to apply for leave of absence from his homestead, and when this was granted he leased the house and grounds to William Beckton of Cannington Manor and the farmland to another neighbour. Arrangements were made for his sisters — he does not tell us what they were — and off he went to London to a new dream.

It was a long step from the fields of Saskatchewan to the art world of London, but Inglis was ready and eager to take it. He studied the antiquities of the British Museum and the treasures of the art galleries and was caught up in the excitement of discovering how his responsiveness to the past evoked a flow of fresh ideas; he affirmed anew his resolve to make art his vocation.

He had good teachers. At the Slade School of London where he studied, John Callcott Horsley, R. A., was his mentor and his friend. Sir Thomas Brock, the eminent sculptor who executed the massive memorial to Queen Victoria outside Buckingham Palace, taught him life drawing: a study which raised some eyebrows and sparked controversy, even in certain art circles of the time. Inglis was not deterred by this prudery and was successful in receiving his 'Life Drawing Certificate'.

But there was unfinished business in Canada, and after two years in London he had to return to his farm. It had been Harriet's wish that their hard-won land should be the nucleus of a family estate, and Inglis too still hoped to find a way to overcome the problems and make it his permanent home. The Dominion Government refused to recognize the time he had spent living on his mother's homestead during her lifetime as part of the fulfillment of his residential duties,

'Crooked Nose Cree' an undated pencil and water-colour drawing by Inglis Sheldon-Williams. From the permanent collection, Regina Public Library.

although he had worked the entire section, so to comply with the bureaucracy of the day he came back to Cannington Manor and spent another two years on the farm.

He did not drop his paintbrushes for his plough handles, and during this period he managed to run his farm and still find time to paint the prairie landscape and the daily life of the pioneer he knew so well. He put his work in various exhibitions and competitions in the area and entered whole-heartedly into community activities. On one occasion he wagered he could walk from Cannington Manor to Moosomin and back, a total distance of eighty miles, in thirty-six hours. It was December, but he arrived in Moosomin in a little more than twelve hours, looking none the worse for his long walk. He had a good night's rest and started out in time the next morning to win his wager.

When he had fulfilled his homesteader's duties and the land was his, Inglis was free to continue his studies. He left his paintings, books and furnishings in his house, turned over the management of his property to Doctor George Hardy of Cannington Manor, a good friend and trustee of his mother's estate, and in the fall of 1896 he went back to London.

It was a happy and productive period in his life. Although money was a constant worry he found the means to further his study at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts

Glenbow-Alberta Institute

'The Farrier Sergeant' a water-colour from the South African War period. The artist enlisted as a trooper but was able to submit pencil sketches to the 'Sphere', an illustrated magazine published in London.

in Paris. He was beginning to be known in art circles and he made his first important sale. He added to his income by lecturing on animal anatomy at an art school and by assisting Henry Brewer, R. I., with whom he shared a studio, with some large mural decorations. But he had difficulty making ends meet and when a total stranger, probably someone who admired his work, offered him a gift of money he was forced to accept it. His sister Dorothea had come to London to keep house for him, and although they were both enjoying the advantages of town life they planned to return to Canada. An unfortunate accident changed Inglis's plans and his future.

The children of his tenant in Cannington Manor, while playing with matches, set the house alight. All his possessions and the house itself were destroyed. It was a blow but he seems to have accepted it with a certain amount of equanimity. He continued to lease the land and used the insurance money from the house to finance further training in London. No doubt his decision to stay on was made easier by his friendship with a fellow student at the Slade School, Ina Maud Thomson, his future wife. She was a young woman of considerable talent and charm whose Victorian father was firmly opposed to any suggestion that she should leave England.

The contretemps was still unresolved when the South African War broke out in 1899. Always eager for new experiences, Inglis enlisted at once in the 28th Company of Imperial Yeomanry, and early in 1900 he went to South Africa where he spent the next sixteen months. He had enlisted as a trooper, but he was able to accept employment with the *Sphere*, an illustrated magazine based in London, to which he submitted pencil sketches to be worked up for publication.

His knowledge of animal and human anatomy and his competent draughtsmanship resulted in a collection of sketches and water-colours which were a vivid, sometimes poignant, sometimes humorous portrayal of the time he spent on the veld. Eventually these drawings came into the possession of the eleventh Earl of Derby who, as Lord Stanley, had been a press censor and then aide-de-camp to Lord Roberts. The collection was exhibited by the Fine Arts Society after the war and again in London in 1937.

The clever pencil of Sheldon-Williams won him an introduction to Lord Roberts who took a personal interest in him. When Roberts learned that Inglis was 'seeking a decision from a lady in England', as it was so delicately phrased, the busy Commander-in-Chief took time out from directing the war to play Cupid, and to make sure that nothing held up Inglis's suit he arranged to have the young couple's correspondence handled through his private mail. Tactfully he enquired of Lord Stanley about the progress of the romance, and he was pleased when he learned that the lady's answer was 'yes'.

'Inglis Sheldon-Williams: Pioneer Artist of the Prairies', Part II, will be published in Spring, 1980.

During his stay in South Africa Lord Stanley commissioned Inglis to do a sketch portrait of Lord Roberts. The artist described it as a most frustrating assignment, as there were constant interruptions to discuss the business of war, and as each visitor was shown in Inglis had to withdraw, save for one occasion 'when Lady Roberts interrupted a sitting with advice to her husband on what to do next to catch De Wet'.

Further commissions from top-ranking British officers followed and by the time the war was over Inglis had made several influential friends who encouraged him and assured him he had the ability to make art his full-time profession. They urged him to make England his home. What better place than London to pursue his search for recognition and financial success? As his fiancée's parents were still adamant that she should stay in England, Inglis yielded to circumstances; but it must have been with some sadness and misgiving that he sold his Canadian farm to his old friend, Henry Brockman. It was the end of a dream.

Inglis did not settle easily into his former London routine. He had travelled a great deal in his short life, and had a well-developed taste for adventure and new experiences. He was restless and, as always, short of money. When the editor of the *Sphere* offered him the opportunity to go to Delhi for the Coronation Durbar of Edward VII, he accepted eagerly. There is reason to believe his influential friends in the British Army were responsible for this appointment, although his splendid work in South Africa was recommendation enough. Always reticent about personal details he says nothing about what his fiancée thought of this latest assignment or what it meant to their wedding plans. He had a contract with the Fine Arts Society to do sixty water-colours recording the pageantry and splendid ceremonies of the Durbar. 'It was strenuous work under luxurious conditions, one watercolour per day and golf,' was his comment. One painting per day was evidently not enough, and he worked furiously on board ship on the way home and for several days after his arrival. In the nick of time he was ready for the Fine Arts Society's showing. Almost the entire collection was bought at once by two private collectors, and he had many orders for duplicates. The first issue of the *Sphere* covering the Durbar was almost all his work, including the drawing on the cover. It was a triumph for him.

Other commissions followed. He covered King Edward VII's visit to Don Carlos in Lisbon in 1903 and was presented informally to the two kings in Don Carlos's bedroom where he was sketching the ruler's bed. His lively interest in everything he came in touch with made him a good companion and attracted people to him. It may also have made him the restless man he was, constantly ready to change, to move, to dream, to try the unknown.

After this pleasurable and admittedly 'cushy' assignment Inglis was sent by the *Sphere* to Japan to cover the Russo-Japanese War. He travelled via New York, San Francisco, and Hawaii with pleasant stopovers in each place. This trip appears to have been his first contact with Americans and he comments on what delightful fellow travellers they were. From Yokohama he went to the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo where the pleasure trip was abruptly over. He had a long frustrating wait as permission to go to the front was constantly delayed by the Japanese. Eventually his paper recalled him, but ever the tourist, he did manage to have an extensive sight-seeing trip to several cities in China with a war-correspondent friend before he made his way home to England.

Perhaps it was because of his unexpected early return to London that he found time to marry his patient fiancée. With his usual terseness about his personal life he wrote simply, '1904. England. Married.'

Ina and Inglis spent their honeymoon on a farm in Sussex. Together they painted and sketched the rural scene about them where the farming techniques were those of past centuries. The record they left of this time in their lives shows the love and admiration they had for the people and animals who worked the land.

The decade before World War I was a happy time for them. They stayed in Sussex for the first year of their marriage and later moved to Gloucestershire. Inglis was painting industriously and becoming increasingly well known. He was invited to exhibit by the Royal Academy, and further invitations followed from Vienna and Paris where his work was well received by the critics although sales were not as numerous as he wished. A daughter was born to the couple and for a period he seemed content. He found a deep satisfaction in his garden and there was time for tennis and cricket. He began to take an interest in politics and did some electioneering. He discovered anew and with warm pleasure the genuine friendliness of people in the country, although this cordial relationship was strained on one occasion when he employed models to pose in the nude at the country art school he had started. 'Local official obstructionists' he snorted, and carried on with his classes.

He does not tell us whether the idyllic country life began to pall or whether he was not making enough money to support his family as he wished, but his old restlessness returned and the lure of the Canadian prairies was too strong to be denied. His sisters were established in Saskatchewan, and in 1913, when he heard there was a real estate boom in Regina he came to Canada alone. He could not give up his dream; he hoped to find a way to establish himself in the West and bring out his wife and daughter later, but 'later' brought World War I and the family was separated for most of the next four years. ◆

Fur Traders in Retirement

BY L. G. THOMAS

Professor Thomas, now retired as head of the history department, University of Alberta, is author and editor of many scholarly papers and books, including the new edition of A. S. Morton's 'History of the Canadian West to 1870-71' (1973). For much of his information about wives and families of the fur traders. Professor Thomas acknowledges his indebtedness to Sylvia Van Kirk whose work has enriched scholarly preceptions of fur-trade society.

Quotations from its Archives by permission of the Hudson's Bay Company.

BY THE MIDDLE of the nineteenth century a little group of middle-aged gentlemen were living in retirement in the staid and Presbyterian atmosphere of North-eastern Scotland. They had known each other in the wide-spread but closely knit society of the British North American fur trade in which many of their friends remained active. They were accustomed to writing letters, not only in the course of business, but as a means of keeping in touch. Their surviving letters, many of them preserved in the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, throw interesting light on the sort of man the successful fur trader was.

Much of the scholarly writing about the fur trade in British North America has set it in its context of British business expansion and consequently sees the fur trader as an instrument of British commercial policy. The admirable work of A. S. Morton, J. S. Galbraith and E. E. Rich, has contributed enormously to our understanding of the trade as it really was. Another view, which has rather more popular appeal and which often owes a good deal to a stereotype created by popular writing and by commercial film-making in the United States, sees the fur trader as hero. This romantic figure, clad in the products of the chase, heavily armed, triumphing with equal ease over the Indian and the obstacles of nature, lurks in the background in the writing of even such a scholarly and sophisticated historian of the Canadian West as Arthur S. Morton. It was not that Morton himself believed in such a figure but that he knew that other people did and somehow could not quite disembarrass himself of a lingering feeling that there might really be something to this figment of the popular imagination. Quite possibly A. S. Morton was right; he generally was, especially when it comes to a matter of the historian's intuition. More recent writers, like Richard Glover and W. J. Eccles, Sylvia Van Kirk and Frits Pannekoek, have left the popular stereotype little pretense to validity. Yet some of the fur traders had heroic qualities, but they were heroes in an agreeably tarnished and very human way, not in the glittering all-wool-and-a-yard-wide manner of late Victorian and Edwardian books for boys, but very good value as heroes in spite of having more than feet of clay.

Many who study the fur trade are now interested in looking at its practitioners not simply as useful instruments, or as improbably blemish-free heroes, but as people, pleasantly fallible and certainly human. One cannot say *simply* as people, because there was nothing simple about them; they were exceedingly complicated and any judgements about them must be comparably tentative. If such a tentative judgement may be advanced, I am inclined to say that many of the most successful traders, men who rose in the trade to the eminence of chief factor or chief trader, did not really like the fur trade and liked even less the way of life the trade dictated. Take Sir Alexander Mackenzie, certainly a heroic figure in the exploration of the Canadian West, and a business genius whose vision of the commercial possibilities of the trade stretched not only across the Atlantic and across North America but also embraced the Pacific and the Far East. Mackenzie's attitude to the life of the fur trade was that it was nasty, brutish and rough, something which had to be endured as a means of furthering the success of a career which would lead him to a knighthood and the life of an affluent Scottish laird. Mackenzie achieved these private goals but it was to be left to George Simpson to preside over the establishment of a commercial mechanism which was substantially what Mackenzie had envisioned, though somewhat less grandiose.

At the other end of the scale is David Thompson, an equally heroic figure though in a very different mold. Certainly he fully deserved Arthur S. Morton's tribute to him as the most intellectual of the North West Company's partners. Unlike Mackenzie, David Thompson thoroughly enjoyed the way of life that the fur trade made possible for him, much as he disapproved of some of the practices of the trade. Unlike Mackenzie he ended his days in the direst poverty. There is more that is tragic than pathetic in his moving plea to George Simpson to take up a subscription to the book he was preparing and to find

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On retirement in the 1840s a group of senior men in the fur trade returned to their homeland and settled with their families in the vicinity of Aberdeen and Edinburgh, Scotland. This view of Aberdeen, circa 1838, is by W. H. Bartlett.

him employment: 'I am a good fisherman, a maker of nets and canoes, and therefore at a fishing Post, can be useful, especially in the curing and smoking of salmon.'

The fur traders who achieved success after the union of 1821 had something in common with both Mackenzie and Thompson but essentially their view of life leant more towards Mackenzie's. They saw their struggle to the top in terms of providing for themselves and their families a more congenial existence than was possible in the posts of the Northwest and, like others who had by hard work, providence and luck achieved a competency, their thoughts often turned to retirement. They could, especially after the rapid development of the Red River as a retirement haven, remain in the Northwest, and of course many did. The thoughts of others turned, and in this they were true pioneers among prairie people, to the felicities of Vancouver Island. Still others settled in the Canadas.

The Scots had long established their predominance in the North West Company and, after the union, former Nor'Westers moved into the higher echelons of the English Company; so that with additional recruitment in Scotland, Scottish predominance among the commissioned gentlemen was established. Of these a substantial minority chose to retire to their native Scotland. The group with which I am particularly concerned settled in the North-east, in Aberdeenshire and adjacent counties, towards the end of the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. They remained in close contact with Sir George Simpson, then at the height of his powers as arbiter of the destinies of the Northwest, and it is upon their letters to him that this paper is based. I have looked at only part of this correspondence and undoubtedly there is also a wealth of material bearing upon the group locked up in the strong-boxes of Scottish legal firms and tucked away in Scottish attics, not to mention what might be gleaned from local newspapers and public records.

Sir George conducted a voluminous correspondence, much of it preserved in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives. It is difficult not to think of him as always dictating — in his office, in his canoe, in his tent at night, as he was lifted out of his canoe — dictating, always dictating. He received many letters, some of them containing quite extraordinary requests. One of my favourites is that written on behalf of Willie D'Urban, grandson of Sir Benjamin D'Urban, the early South African proconsul. Willie, it appears, was 'very fond of natural history & is most desirous to possess a living beaver, a young one. When one comes

in your way will you kindly think of this?' The beaver was duly delivered but regrettably did not long survive. Whether Sir George was asked for a replacement does not appear. But for sheer frivolity another must take pride of place. '. . . friends . . . are getting up a Fancy Ball at the west End!! It has just struck me that you might perhaps kindly put me in the way of obtaining the loan of an Indian Warriors Dress . . . and give me a hint how to be-daub my face . . .' Then a postscript, 'What is the *correct* Dress of a voyageur? failing the other, that might do, perhaps.'

The fur traders, whether still in the field or in retirement, were no less exigent in their requests to the governor, whether for a wedding dress for a daughter or employment for a young protégé.

Thus Robert Miles, writing to Simpson from Moose Factory in 1848:

> I must now draw to a close by mentioning that a few days since, Mr. Clouston of this Esbt. made application to Margt for her hand (which she communicated to her Mother) & as the same seems to have been favorably received by both Mother & Daughter, Mr. C. then made known his wishes to myself . . . May I therefore be permitted to trouble you on this occasion, by requesting the favor of your sending us via Temiscamingue p the Spring Canoes the articles enumerated in the enclosed List, and which, from your usual kind consideration on such occasions, I have no doubt you will comply with through the medium of some of your Lachine friends, altho' I trust the same will not be ordered too expensive. I would not have taken this liberty were it not that Margt. is destitute of any appropriate dress for the occasion . . .

And George Keith, from Aberdeen in the same year:

> Mr. Swanstons eldest son has been under our protection since the autumn of '46 and of course has been kept at school regularly and made satisfactory progress in his studies, writes a rather good fist and been a good deal commended by his masters for his industry and tact [?] in Arithmetic. . . . Not foreseeing that he would be so soon prepared for launching out into the world, I have not as yet had any parlais with his Father as to the avocation he wishes him to embrace . . . he may wish him to be engaged in his own Trade — in which I think he would give satisfaction — but this can only be effected under your kind and powerful Patronage — even at a rather distant period in consequence of many and prior applications. However if my relative should apply for such a favor I hope and fondly trust you will have the kindness to do the best you can. The youths age is 15 years & nearly 5 months.

Given this view of Simpson as the universal provider, a view that casts a kindlier light upon his controversial character, it is not surprising that men who had a close business relationship with him should confide in him about their affairs. He did not fail his correspondents and he evidently took a good deal of trouble over the investments and other interests of his old associates. Indeed this may have been one of the things that, quite apart from his official connection with the Company, made Simpson such a power in Canadian business circles.

As these men had known Simpson well, and appreciated his insatiable appetite for information, their letters are full of gossip and are a treasure house of information about the personal affairs and personalities of the senior men of the trade. Many of the letters quoted here were written by George Keith who, born in 1779, retired in 1844 after a successful career to Aberdeen. By 1849 he may be presumed to have settled into the routine of retirement. Those he mentions as part of his circle of friends included a number of other retired fur traders, most of them chief factors.

All were (with the exception of John Charles, a Greycoat apprentice born in London) Scots by birth and all had served the fur trade in a rank sufficiently senior to permit them to become men of substance though it is fairly evident that their financial circumstances varied considerably. They had a considerable community of interest and experience and it was natural that they should keep in touch and follow one another's doings with considerable interest.

A major concern of the successful fur trader was to provide for his family and this concern runs through much of the correspondence of Keith and his colleagues. Mrs George Keith was the daughter of a North West Company clerk, James Sutherland, who died about 1823, and a Chipewyan, or part Chipewyan, woman. The Keiths were formally married at Lachine in 1844. After Keith's death, 'the Duchess', as her husband often called her, may have returned to Canada to live with a daughter who married Chief Trader John Swanston. James Keith, a younger brother, returned to Scotland and married a distant cousin, Susan Angus, not, as W. S. Wallace states, Isobel Simpson, Sir George's sister-in-law.

John Charles, reputedly the richest man in the service, had a large family by his country wife, Jane Auld, and their daughter Betsey married John McCallum, the Red River schoolmaster. After Jane's death Charles married his son-in-law's sister, Margaret McCallum, and left his fine house in Red River for Scotland, where Betsey joined them after her husband's death. Another retired fur trader who, like George Keith, brought his mixed-blood wife to Scotland, was Alexander Christie, who married Anne Thomas, daughter of Governor Thomas Thomas and an Indian woman. The Christies settled at Ashlay, near Aberdeen, in 1849. Like Mrs Keith, Mrs Christie appears to have made an admirable adjustment to the new society.

The style of life these men adopted was that of men of substance in rural nineteenth-century Scotland. Beyond that George Keith at least did not aspire. 'We have now got our humble Premises in pretty good order. Our garden is a great favourite. . . . We have also got accomodation for a Gig Carriage, 2 Stalls for Horses or Ponys & room for a Cow — to be available when circumstances call for their use. So far, economical considerations have led us to dispense with all these, but as we have a distance of nearly two miles

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Mary Charles and her father John Charles, photographed in Edinburgh. John Charles, reputedly the richest man in HBC service, built 'a fine new house' in Scotland and lived in a style 'too gay and too stylish' for some of his fur-trade friends.

to Church, if spared, we will need by and by to provide some of these travelling means.' George Keith permitted himself a sardonic tone when he wrote of colleagues who aspired to more grandeur.

John Haldane, who retired in 1827 and died in Edinburgh thirty years later, 'sports a Carriage (chaise I think) and it is conjectured a footman also . . . had been travelling on the Continent' with his sister and 'has quite discarded me.' His brother James found John Charles, then in Edinburgh ('the Modern Athens') 'too gay and too stylish for me.' He thought that Angus Cameron, who retired as Chief Factor in 1844 and settled on a farm, had made 'the best choice of any of us.' Cameron, whose long life suggests that farming agreed with him, could scarcely have been idle. 'I have taken Fifty acres of land on a Lease of Seven Years which I have got at a moderate rent & ajoining my own property making it convenient for me to get [it] cultivated with nearly the same cost as I had to lay out on my own little property & besides its thought that this piece of ground will shortly be sold & if it can be got at a reasonable price I should be inclined to buy it.' This venture was duly noted by George Keith as giving Cameron 'about 88 acres to exercise his skill and industry upon'; in the same letter he mentions Cameron's profitable venture in railway shares, a fashionable speculation of the mid-nineteenth century. Busy as he was with his farming and his investments Cameron could be mildly censorious about the frivolities of his friends. 'I hear that our Friend Mr. James Keith is becoming one of the gayest of the Gay citizens of Aberdeen, giving frequent dinners & parties to fashionable people of both sexes.' 'Poor Sieveright' (John Sieveright who retired in 1849 and died at Edinburgh in 1856), he added, 'is sadly out of his element cooped up in "Auld Reikie" without any acquaintance except Mr. Charles, who is also rather unsettled.'

As small *rentiers* the former fur traders were much preoccupied with their business affairs and, as they were writing to Simpson, had frequent occasion to mention them. They were also, fortunately for the curious researcher, prone to pass on bits of gossip about the affairs of their friends. George Keith, for example, remarks of Charles's 'fine new house' that 'his friend Mr. Shaw has undertaken to furnish a good deal of the funds (on I presume easy terms) required for the payment of the castle and part of the furniture . . . his Settlement will be an expensive Speculation but I presume he can well afford it.' The impression is that generally their investments were exceedingly conservative, almost as conservative as their political

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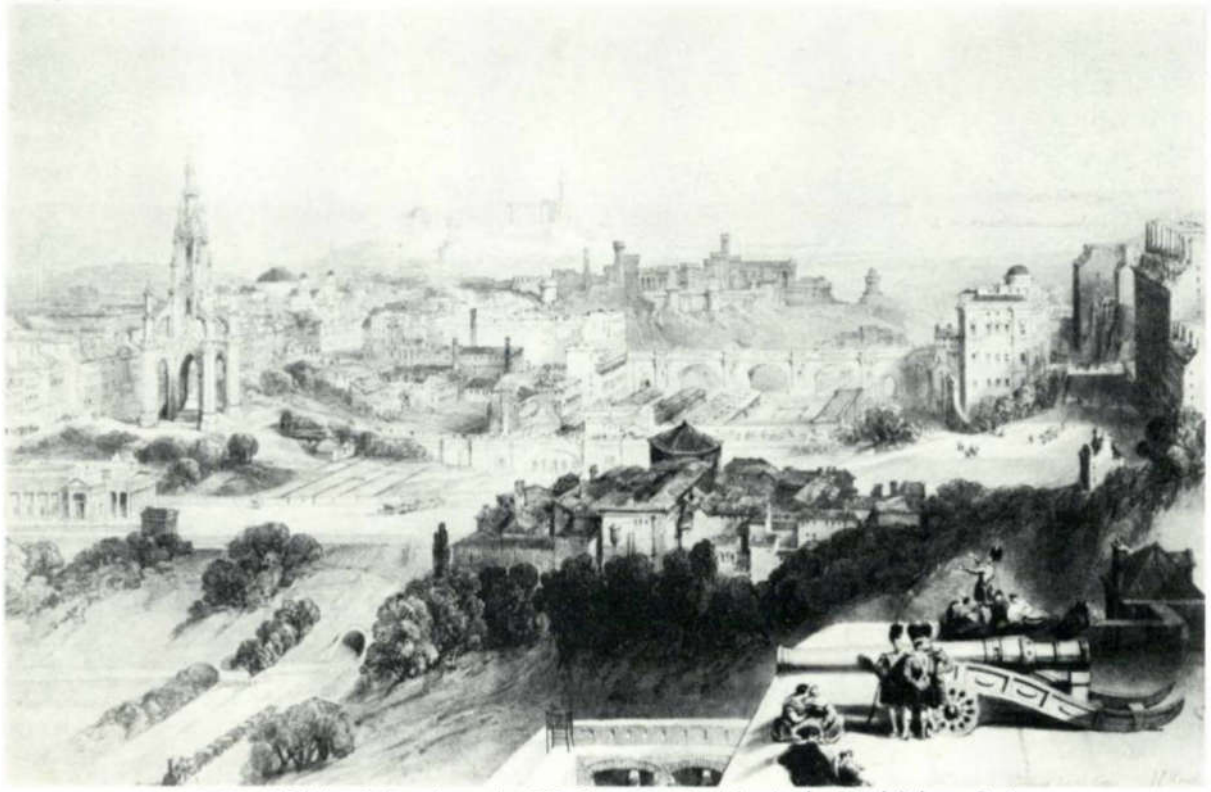


A view of Edinburgh from the castle, 1850. From an original drawing by David Roberts, R. A.

attitudes, of which their letters afford an occasional glimpse. Thus retired Chief Factor Robert Cowie in 1849: 'Annexation is the only remedy, the Nation Canadienne will soon be swamped in a Yankee Union. If matters don't mend & nothing better casts up I am looking towards Vancouvers Island, my better plan probably would be to start right off.'

If the retired gentlemen had problems in adapting to a new way of life — and certainly some of them took to the bottle, a circumstance faithfully reported by their friends to Sir George — the difficulties of their wives, especially of those who were natives of the Northwest, must have been incomparably greater. Mrs George Keith, plunged into Aberdeen gentility, seems, like Mrs Christie, to have risen to the challenge, though both were often homesick for the West. 'We have been fortunate in being blessed with such excellent health and also, in falling into such a sociable neighbourhood. The Gud-wife consequently has acquired a considerable smattering of the English language, together with some comparative degree of civilised polish.' A year later the Keiths were still not discouraged, though hurt by reports that a Mrs M'Tavish, probably Elizabeth 'Eppie' Cameron, third wife of Chief Factor John George McTavish, had 'not reported very favourably of the Society of our homely dwellings . . . . It was certainly our wish originally to show her all the kindness in our power . . . probably of little moment to her, as from our limited intercourse with Gentle Folks, she would have derived little advantage. Indeed besides being little qualified to shine in the *grande monde*, we feel little desire to intrude ourselves . . . we have spent such a comparatively long life time in, I am thankful to say, happy seclusion. Yet altho' our circle is limited — we are not altogether solitary. So far, our Neighbours around have been everything we could expect or almost wish — and we are not altogether unknown in town. Of course, the Gud-wife is far from being at *home* in company but our friends are indulgent and make due allowances, and all things considered . . . she deserves some credit for acting or playing her part so well as she does.' To take an appropriate place in society was important to Keith: 'I am almost envious of my kind friend Mr. Charles' popularity' — but, if he and his wife were asked to his brother James's parties for the 'gayest of the Gay', the experience must have been a taxing one for Mrs Keith.

The wives, especially if they were 'country-born', were in this sense the victims of their husbands' ambitions for their children, for to establish their children in a more eligible way of life than that which the fur trade could provide seems to have been as compelling a motive in the fur trader's return to his

Collection of Elaine Mitchell

Alexander Christie and his wife Anne, daughter of Governor Thomas Thomas and an Indian woman. Mrs Christie made an admirable adjustment to her new life in Scotland.

homeland as his own desire to end his days in an easier and more congenial environment. Again the retired gentlemen turned to Simpson. 'I feel greatly obliged' wrote Angus Cameron, 'by your full communication regarding my niece's affairs and consider it a fortunate matter for her that her interest has fallen into such good hands . . . .' George Keith was pleased to learn that his daughter was reconciled to the fact that his grandson John Heron had become a soldier 'as I suspect he is a very fickle kind of a character, like too many of the unfortunate Half-breeds . . . and needs to be kept under proper discipline and restraint.' In October 1848 Angus Cameron reported that he was going to Aberdeen to place his son Alexander at college. By the following August Alexander, after a winter at King's College, promised 'to make a good Scholar, but the truth is' his father wrote, 'I am rather at a loss what to make of him; a great many young men study for law, medicine or the church, who find it very difficult to gain a livelyhood in this country. I have no friends among the great or men in power to whom I could apply . . . . I still venture to hope that you will find an opening for entering my boy in the Company's service . . . . I shall give him a good education & if I did not think him a fit subject for the Service I would not presume to recommend him.' Cameron, essentially a practical man, if not exactly the soul of tact, seems to have regarded the service of the Company as a last resort — he had on another occasion asked Simpson to recommend a nephew for employment by a Canadian bank — but he evidently realized that it was not easy for the sons of fur traders to establish themselves in the United Kingdom. Even when it was possible it did not always end happily. George Keith's grandson Charles Swanston had been with his grandparents for two years to further his education; he had successfully found employment but died of consumption at the age of 16½: 'he was liking and giving much satisfaction in the business in which he was engaged for something more than three months.'

Daughters presented problems if anything even more serious than sons. George Keith had little love for the Mrs M'Tavish who had been so ungracious about the quality of the society in which he was attempting to establish his family in Aberdeenshire but he clearly felt sorry for her step-daughter Frances, whom she had left behind in Scotland with aunts who were reluctant to accept the responsibility. 'I fear Miss Frances feels the change of scenery and society very uncomfortable and cheerless. The Belles in Town I hear titter a good deal about her embonpoint — but this will wear off by degrees I hope when better known.' Keith worried about the finances of his daughter at Ile Jesus: ' . . . the Farm, under the most industrious and

Hudson's Bay Company Archives

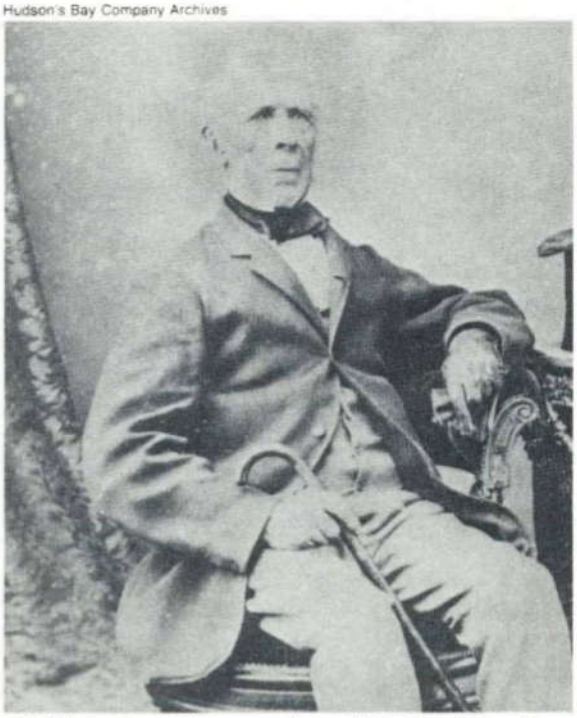
Retired Chief Factor Angus Cameron with his family at Niagara Falls, 1858. On the left is his son James (aged 12); his nephew, Angus Cameron and his wife Frances, daughter of Sir George Simpson; Chief Factor Angus Cameron; and his niece, Grace Cameron.

skilful management (of which I fear Mr. Heron falls much short) can scarcely be made to produce the means required for the family establishment and the savings in the far west are I expect being brought to a low ebb.' The health of his daughter Jane, nearly 19 in 1848, was a source of worry as well as expense: '. . . having been less or more troubled with a bad cough . . . there is every possibility we shall have to proceed soon, *Bag & Baggage*, to the South of England, likely to Torquay or Rothsay [Ramsay?], and leave for a season this humble but comfortable home.' Keith evidently decided on the Isle of Wight, proceeding there with Jane and followed by his wife and younger daughter, 'who is becoming pretty intelligent and healthy but I lament to say unable to speak still.' The Keiths decided on Ventnor but finding their 'monotonous winter quarters' there unsatisfactory and the weather too warm, moved on to Clifton for nearly three weeks in 'this gay and favourite place' and then to London for a week. These travels cost Keith over £200 ('I grudged most Doctors fees and Druggs'), but Jane's condition slightly improved, though in the summer Keith was again proposing a family excursion, this time to Ballater. Though one might expect the retired gentlemen to share the mid-Victorian preoccupation with suitable marriages for their daughters, I have come across no direct references to this in the letters I have read. It was enough perhaps to keep them alive and reasonably happy. Jane Keith, sad to relate, died of consumption in 1848, a fate all too common among the 'country-born' children sent to Britain. John Charles, whose comings and goings may have been related to the health of his wife and daughter, was obliged to commit them both to a mental asylum.

Keith recounts still another episode that throws light on the social discomforts to which these newcomers were subjected. 'Two years ago the two Misses L. who reside in Town [presumably Aberdeen] did not behave very handsomely at least — calling on and coaxing our friends — they obtained a subscription of £15 — for an association, then getting up, for the benefit of Superanuated and Reduced Ladies or Gentlewomen & altho [they] apologized for not calling according to etiquette sooner — they carried off the prize, but never said How do you do-since!' The social climate of North-eastern Scotland at the middle of the last century can scarcely have been wholly congenial to young and inexperienced women from a wholly different environment where, whatever its disadvantages, they had, as the wives and daughters of chief factors and chief traders, been very much top people.

The larger correspondence of the fur traders, not only the tiny sample I have been using here, suggests they felt very keenly their isolation from their own kind. Many of their letters reflect an almost desperate loneliness, an effort to keep in touch not only with their friends in the trade but with the world they had left behind, whether in the Canadas or across the Atlantic. In some ways this isolation was even greater after the union than it had been in the days of conflict between the companies. In spite of the violence that characterized the bitter commercial rivalry, the necessity of opposition meant that posts were closer together and establishments were larger than after

Hudson's Bay Company Archives



Chief Factor Angus Cameron, who made 'the best choice of any of us'. He retired to Firhall, Nairn, where he had 88 acres of land to farm, and lived to the age of 94.

Simpson's skilful rationalization of the trade. The records before 1821 are full of references to attempts, not always unsuccessful, to enter into human relationships that transcended the struggle for dominance in the trade. After the union the man in charge of a post would be fortunate indeed if he had more than one subordinate who had any acquaintance with the world outside the West. In these circumstances he grasped at any chance for sociability, he warmly welcomed chance visitors of his own kind, and he expanded his business letters into an exchange of personal news and news about mutual acquaintances. As a result a net of friendships grew up that extended from Vancouver Island to the King's Posts far to the eastward. Reinforced by intermarriage and the close kinship ties of both Scottish and Indian society this network may have something to do with the curious fact that Canadians, at least Canadians within some strata of our social structure, all seem to know one another, or at least to know one another's friends and relations. The nature of the fur trade made this kind of sociability of great importance. Not only was it useful for purely business purposes but it ameliorated to some extent the human rigours of the fur trader's life.

This sociability the retired gentlemen attempted to maintain in Scotland where at the same time they sought a life that would be richer in its human context than the life of the Northwest. They certainly sought each other out and seem to have felt it incumbent upon them to keep in touch. The results were not always fortunate. A friendship based on a chance meeting at some remote outpost, nurtured by an exchange of letters and newspapers and an occasional encounter at Norway House or York, did not always flourish in the more fertile social compost of rural Aberdeenshire or sophisticated Edinburgh. They found the impulse to seek each other's company irresistible but when they met, and even more when they failed to meet, a closer intimacy was not always as rewarding as they had hoped. Nor was it quite as easy. When Charles moved from Aberdeen to Edinburgh James Keith observed regretfully that this meant that 'our small number of retired H. Bay Gentlemen north of Edinboro is scattered in such a manner, as seldom to permit even three of us to meet together.' Distances in Scotland, though minute by comparison with the Northwest, presented an obstacle. 'True, Friend Cameron & I *can boast* of each keeping a Horse and carriage, but somehow or other I have not yet found my way to Firhall in my own carriage . . . about 95[?] miles. My Wife & I took two Jaunts to the Country . . . while these premises were in the hands of the Painter & Paperhanger but our ne plus ultra was Banff (45 miles) . . . & Braemar . . . (57 miles) . . . . We had two passing visits from R. Cowie while on a tour de plaiser.' Still they did get about; Sieveright paid a week's visit to his old friend, Angus Cameron, when they came to the not unsurprising conclusion that Scotsmen made the best postmasters. He came back the following summer 'to attend the sea-bathing.' Colin Campbell visited the George Keiths before returning to London. In spite of Sieveright's 'many good traits' Keith found him 'not very companionable, being so deaf and rather censoriously inclined.' James Keith seems to have been quite content to settle down to his own pursuits when Sieveright decided not to remain permanently in Aberdeenshire. 'During the very short days & continued muggy, overcast & frequently rainy weather at this season of the year, an Idler like your humble servant, requires to be up & moving about to keep one's self in proper spirits. My Poney under saddle & my Poney under harness is alternately in requisition & with all these precautions I have no doubt that my *Phiz* would seldom be in a favorable state to copy a likeness from.'

How did it all turn out? Did they really succeed in establishing themselves and after themselves their families as minor Scottish gentlefolk? Alexander Mackenzie had achieved it earlier. Donald Smith managed it rather more grandly a generation or so later. But what happened to the Keiths and the Camerons, the Sieverights and the Charleses, I do not know. It should not be impossible to find out. Meanwhile these sober — well, generally speaking, quite sober — conscientious, humourous, well-intentioned, perhaps rather stuffy men are quite as attractive and rather more interesting than the swashbuckling 'lords of the North' who still stride and clank through that rather dubious construction, the Canadian folk-memory. ◆

DOG SLEDGE HOLIDAY

Photographs and Text by Richard Harrington

Photographer Harrington was first published in 'The Beaver' in 1945. His book 'Face of the Arctic', 1954, was based on five dog-team journeys that he made in the Canadian Arctic. A recent book 'Richard Harrington's Antarctic' followed three summer cruises to the continent.

Author Harrington, his hand on the ice-chisel brake, with his driver, Knute.

BETWEEN 1948 AND 1953, I made five lengthy dog-team trips with the Inuit in the Canadian Arctic. I travelled several thousand kilometres, often under the toughest conditions. Holed up in igloos by storms, we occasionally ran out of food, and subsisted on twice-boiled tea until we could reach the supplies and hospitality of the next Hudson's Bay Company post.

That harsh mode of life made an indelible impression on my mind. I can still feel the biting winds, the cold, and myself at the point of exhaustion; can still see our dogs dying of hunger.

So it was with some surprise that I heard early in 1979 of a New York travel agency arranging dog-sledge trips in East Greenland. I enquired further and was informed that one should be in good physical condition and have warm winter clothing. The agency would take care of everything else.

So far, so good. Full of curiosity as to how it would turn out, who would join such an expedition for fun and how the Greenlanders managed their sleds and dogs, I signed up for the two-week trip.

I still had my winter clothing — long underwear bought in Churchill, heavy socks from the Padlei post, and a thick green plaid shirt purchased from L. A. Learmonth when he ran the post at Spence Bay, N.W.T.

I met the rest of the party in Reykjavik, Iceland. Nine Americans trooped off the plane from New York. I was the sole Canadian. The guests were between 35 and 73 years old, among us a banker who had retired the previous week and his wife, and a retired colonel close to 70 who was making the trip for a second time. The travel agency's guide, George Holton, had made two trips the previous year and was partly the organizer of the whole venture.

As a result, Lindblad Travel Incorporated, noted for its unusual world-wide holiday tours, now includes two trips to East Greenland each April when the snow is still hard but the air no longer bitterly cold.

In Reykjavik, Mr Holton examined our clothes for suitability, and some members hastily bought lovely, heavy Icelandic sweaters.

Two Cessna aircraft had been chartered to carry us westward across Denmark Strait, and the moment the weather was reported clear on Greenland's East Coast, we packed into the planes and were off.

It was a two-and-a-half-hour flight over the pack ice drifting down from the polar sea in the north, and we could understand why the East Coast of Greenland was so long unexplored. From the air, we saw the sheer bare precipices, the rocky islands, and the tangle of fiords running crookedly into the land to meet glaciers seeping down from the vast ice cap, which glistened in the pure air.

We set down at Kulusuk, close to the most easterly of the DEW Line stations. There were no official formalities as we entered the Danish dependency of East Greenland, and a helicopter waited to bear us to Angmagssalik, 15 air minutes away.

Angmagssalik (place of many capelin) is the largest settlement on the East Coast, and the only town. Its population is nearly a thousand Danes and native people and their offspring. Mixed marriages are highly acceptable. The native people do not care for the terms 'Eskimo' or 'Inuit.'

'We are Greenlanders' they insist.

I had expected something fairly primitive, for Greenlanders on the West Coast had told me that the East Coast people were backward. So they were until Denmark took a strong hand at the beginning of this century, moved in hunting and fishing gear, built hospitals and docks, and established social services. The population of Angmagssalik has since multiplied by five, from the 216 of 1900, and there has been a corresponding increase in the hamlets beyond.

I was astounded at the neatness of the town sprawled on dark rock around a splendid natural harbour. Red, blue, green — the wooden houses were painted in bright colours in contrast to the bare rock on which they stood. An oil-delivery truck and a bulldozer-snowplough both driven by native Greenlanders, indicated assimilation in the labour force as well as socially.

We were welcomed at Angmagssalik Hotel, the only hotel in East Greenland, by its Danish owner, Kelly Nicolaisen. Its twelve bedrooms boasted hot and cold running water, and the bathrooms held the only flush toilets on the 1700-mile coast. We unpacked in our small rooms and went down to a snack of open-face sandwiches and coffee in the dining room where wide windows fronted a jagged range, rising to the austere peak of thousand-metre Mt Kingmertajik.

The party crosses a lake near Iketaq.

George Holton gave us another briefing. We would visit some homes in town. The first thing on entering a Greenland home, no matter how small, was to remove outdoor boots in the vestibule.

Outside, the air almost shimmered in sunlight. The sheltered harbour was still mostly frozen, though a small boat worked to keep open a channel to the sea, to hasten early shipping. East Greenlanders depend totally on goods shipped directly from Denmark in the short summer.

During the entire expedition I lived in a sort of ambivalence, swinging between delightful surprises and nostalgia for the grim frugal travelling I had done in the Canadian North. Progress had arrived and everything up-to-date, including four snowmobiles for as many kilometres of road, was available.

At the same time, there were more sled dogs than I had seen before at one time, 500 in all. I could believe that figure when I heard the evocative howling of these 'arctic nightingales'. The dogs are chained near the houses, and fed on meal bagged in Denmark, for seals are scarce along the East Coast. The dogs looked well with tails held high, though I got into earnest discussion over the larger size and greater stamina of the Canadian meat-fed huskies.

Dogs are used extensively in East Greenland for hauling goods in winter, for ice-fishing, seal-hunting and communication between villages — most things

that in summer are done by boat. Our briefing included instructions about the dogs and about our shakedown run the next day: 'Do not feed the dogs. Do not attempt to pet a dog. You ride the sledge most of the time, but relieve the dogs by walking up hills.' It sounded easy and pleasant.

What a heart-warming sight it was next morning to see eleven dog-teams waiting for us on the harbour ice, tails curled over their backs, yelping and lunging to get going. Each of our group was assigned a driver and his team and sledge. I have never understood the mentality

The harbour at Angmagssalik.

of a husky. His is a tough life on scant rations (they are fed only once a week in summer) and yet he is always 'raring to go', pulls hard, almost tirelessly, and has energy left over to indulge in fights. In this they are no different from their Canadian cousins.

The sledges are different from the heavy kamotiks I knew. The runners and slats are of hardwood, not lashed together but fastened with screws. The runners are shoed in steel rather than iced mud, so they can bump and scrape over rocky terrain with little damage. The rear of the sledge is built up to form a backrest with grips for the driver to hold on to while standing on the back of the sledge. A jagged bit of iron suspended on a spring when not in use, serves as a brake. Additional brakes are loops of rope or chain that would be thrown under the runners to slow a downhill run. Another device is to hobble an over-eager husky by tucking a front leg into the harness. The drivers urge their teams on by trilling sounds and the occasional flick of a 10-metre whip.

Knute, my driver, had nine dogs, and he sat in front of me on a caribou skin, where others used blankets or a bearskin. My dozen words of Inuit meant nothing to him, for the East Coast dialect is unlike that of the West Coast and of Canada. He did recognize 'kingmik' (dog), but smiled at my pronunciation.

Over a hundred dogs set off up the bay, leaving behind the wails of all the others who wanted to come too. The day was brilliant; the mountains crisp and clear and forbidding. I leaned back, comfortable as never before on a dog sled. Ahead the team fanned out, each dog on a separate nylon trace, picking its way independently around and over rough terrain. Nylon traces tangle as quickly as seal hide, but are not as tempting to eat.

The guests were critical of the no-nonsense attitude of the unsentimental drivers, not yet realizing that the husky is not a house pet to be coddled. But I noticed that most of the critics remained seated on all but the steepest hills. Indeed, one lady felt relaxed enough to manicure her nails, and it was said, even plucked her eyebrows during our run.

Each driver received $70.00 a day. The rates were high according to my memory, but inflation is spectacular in Greenland and Iceland.

Our second outing was an overnight trip to the hamlet of Iketaq, 45 kilometres due west. Again I felt the excitement of travelling with over a hundred dogs into the snow-patched mountains under a spring-blue sky. A patter of feet, panting, and the team behind us swept ahead.

We mounted to a chain of lakes, ran their portages through passes still deep in snow. The highlight came at the outflow of a lake which formed a frozen waterfall 50-60 metres high, covered with snow and almost perpendicular. A long rope was lowered, and we slithered down the steep slope, hand over hand, scrabbling for footholds.

At the base everyone brought out cameras, still and movie, colour and a few black and white. They had something dramatic to record as the drivers skilfully hurtled down the steep incline in seconds without a single spill, using brake, chain and rope to control momentum. Then the next team plunged down, dogs in a frightened gallop.

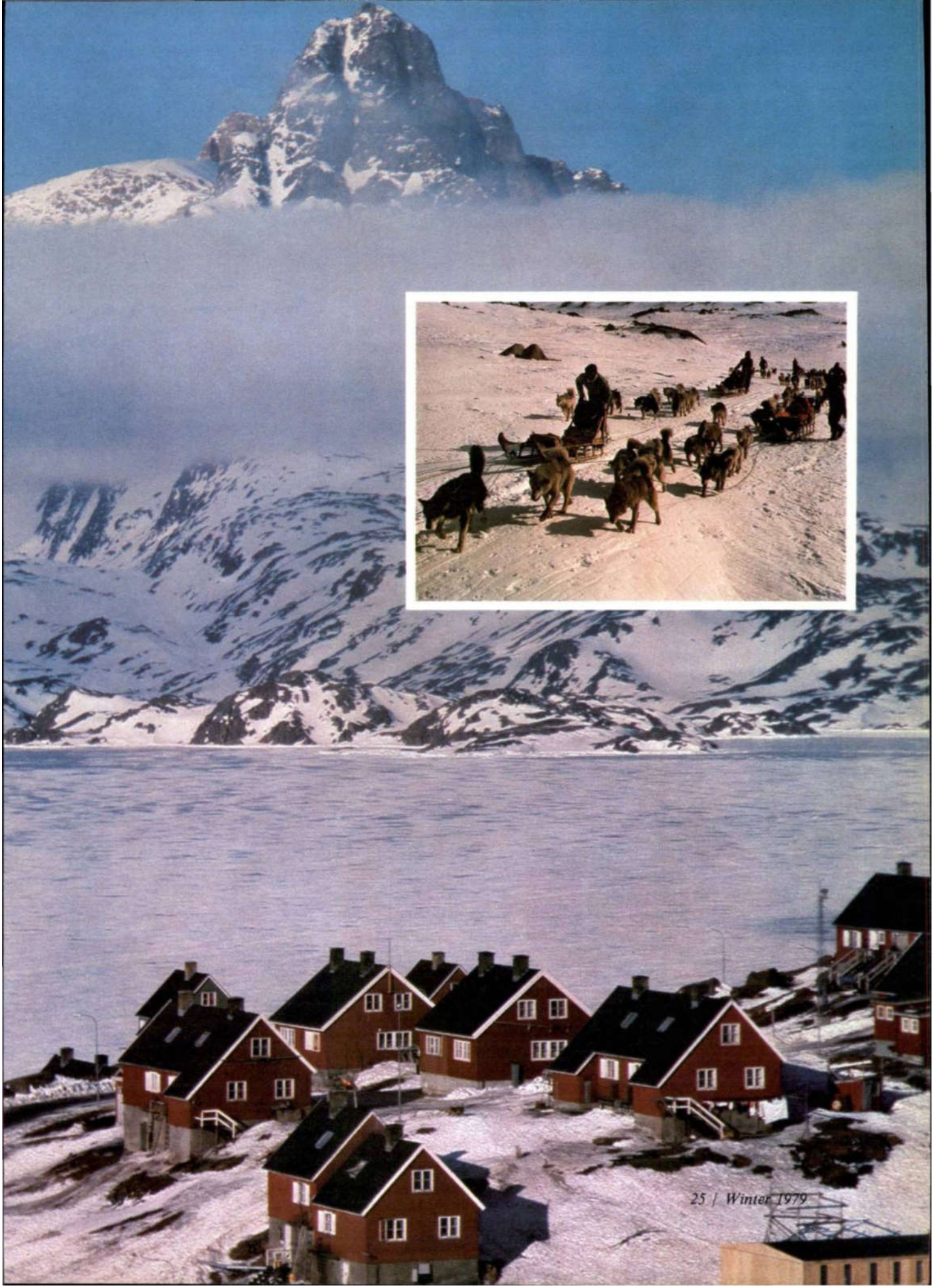
Sea ice made less dramatic travel, but we wove a trail among icebergs transfixed in position until the June weather would float them free. Thousands of photos must have been taken to flaunt the members' daring to home-bound friends.

At Iketaq, the entire population of 25 stood on a small hill as we raced in, troubling the peace of all the local dogs. A small building that housed the school and the church was turned over to our use. All was shiny clean. Fresh snow was brought in to melt for tea, and two primus stoves began their familiar roaring. The sound recalled the many igloos I had stopped in years ago, to drink tea with my Inuit friends.

Iketaq boasts not a single wheeled vehicle. Kayaks were suspended on posts, out of dogs' reach, and racks of drying fish and seal meat stood close to the houses, food for man and beast. Smoke rose from the village's one remaining stone-and-sod dwelling.

Continued on page 27

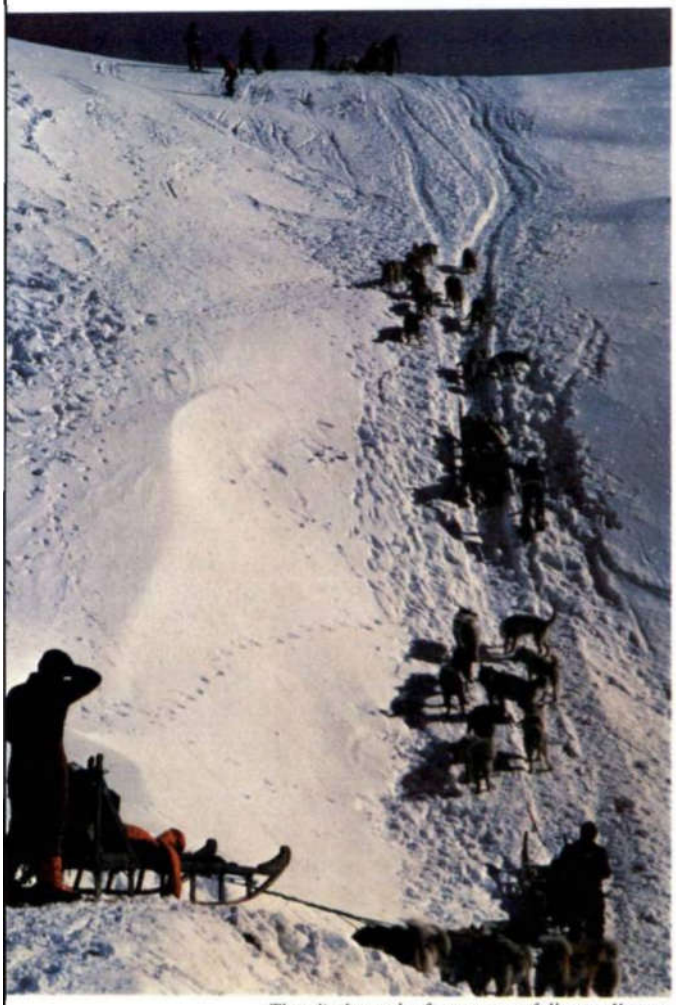
Angmagssalik with Mount Kingmertajik in the background.



The dog-teams with their drivers and passengers, descend a slope near Angmagssalik.

A dog's paw, cut by sharp ice, is protected by a boot.

Fish racks at Tinitequilaq.



The climb up the frozen waterfall near Iketaq.

Lunch on an outcropping of rock.

Later, stomach full, I lay in my sleeping bag before the Lutheran altar, and recalled how often I had slept on the floor in an HBC post, where I was made welcome after weeks on the trail and camping in igloos. Then I had often felt I had reached the limits of my endurance. This Greenland holiday was a picnic.

The return to Angmagssalik next morning after a hearty breakfast of porridge laced with raisins, again took five to six hours, but this time we had to go *up* the frozen waterfall, again clinging to a rope. The dogs

Seal hunting.

whined and scrabbled, while the drivers pushed the sledges alternately with some wheezing passenger.

When we reached sea ice Karl Pivat, our chief driver, demonstrated how he stalked a sleepy seal near its hole. A sort of miniature sled supported a white cotton screen with a hole in the middle for his .22 calibre rifle. Behind this shield, he could advance unnoticed to within shooting distance. In his bear-skin pants, sealskin coat and high boots, Karl had proof that he was a good hunter. He had killed two polar bears in the last month.

Back in our hotel, everyone showered in hot water and changed for dinner, to sit down to an excellent meal of soup, locally baked bread, meat and tinned vegetables. It was a contrast to my memories of the Canadian Arctic when we had sometimes not washed for weeks, eaten with our fingers and hunting knives, and worn a full complement of caribou-skin clothing. But the snug hotel brought back memories of other over-heated buildings when my sunburned face prickled uncomfortably. On this trip we all wore city-bought clothes, for it was now mid-April and Greenland's cold is tempered by the Gulf Stream.

Very few Greenlanders today possess the traditional hunter's costume. Seals are scarce in local waters, and the demand for polar bear skins comes from cities at prices no hunter cares to refuse. Most of the skins come

from a small settlement on Scoresby Sound, halfway up the long coast. Several times we were served boiled seal meat and roasted bear meat, which I found as tasty as years ago.

On a free day in Angmagssalik, we visited several book-crammed Danish homes, a kindergarten, and an Old Folks' Home (8 inmates) where old women created beadwork of traditional designs in doilies and shoulder capes worth $200.00.

The government store was stocked from an ample warehouse, displaying tins of Alaska king crab at $8.00

'Tupilaks', whaletooth carvings of mythical figures.

and aquavit behind a screen. (Spirits are sold only on Friday and Saturday, and to all Greenlanders.) Of greater interest to tourists were the *tupilaks*, whaletooth carvings of weird mythical half-beasts. These figures, 10-15 centimetres high, are unique to Greenland, and little is known about them, but like the soapstone carvings of Canadian Inuit, they have become commercially valuable.

Our final sledge junket was a four-day trip north-west to Tinitequilaq, a six-hour run over glaciers and frozen fiords. There were long climbs, followed by wild rides downhill. Often the dogs would disappear over a ridge, and the sledge would trail behind willy-nilly. On one such occasion the sledge capsized, spilling me out. The only damage was a burst seam in my borrowed wind pants, not too serious at that time of year. I slid to the bottom of the ridge, scooped up my camera bag, and climbed back aboard.

A margin of open water lay along the fiord in front of the village of some 200 people. Here men readied their dories for spring fishing of cod, halibut and dogshark. Dried fish hung in thousands on the wooden racks. A couple of men put-putted out of the fiord to hunt seals.

We were quartered in my driver's home — typical and spotless, with its house plants, shelf of books in Danish, framed snapshots on the walls. We padded around in stockinged feet, selecting sleeping space for the night. Some took the two bedrooms, another the kitchen floor, a third the sofa in the living room, while I bedded down under the table quite comfortably. We spent an hour in the community hall, where young people in platform shoes danced to raucous music and drank coffee at a little bar.

Back home, Knute's wife noticed the split in my pantleg, promptly sat down on the floor, legs straight in front, and neatly sewed up the gap.

The next day, Easter Sunday, saw a crowd at the church. The men came sober-suited, boys loaded with chains and necklaces. Only three matrons wore the traditional, decorated, high sealskin boots, the beaded berthas, or wore the characteristic topknot.

We made excursions on the fiord, but the weather closed in and the snow became soft and sticky, so we abandoned the plan to visit a polar-bear-hunting village. By the time we reached Angmagssalik, we had had seven full days of sledging and were ready for a change.

We arranged a charter flight in the big helicopter. For $160.00 per person, we would be flown up to the ice cap which covers 80 per cent of Greenland. We would never have such an opportunity again, we knew. In half an hour nine of us were set down gently at 1,100 metres, where the Helheims Glacier starts its sluggish crawl to the sea.

Actually, there is little to interest the average eye in a field of snow stretching hundreds of square kilometres. We found the cross-hatched crevasses and fissures of the glacier more awe-inspiring. Still, it was a thrill standing so close to one of Nature's wonders, and gazing up to the remote heights. Guests picked small rocks from a nearby mound as souvenirs of a momentous experience, drank hot cocoa from thermos flasks, 'snapped' one another, and climbed back into the helicopter.

'How can Greenland communities exist economically with so many modern frills, and little visible income?' I asked an English-speaking Dane.

'Well, it's like this — we cut each other's hair.'

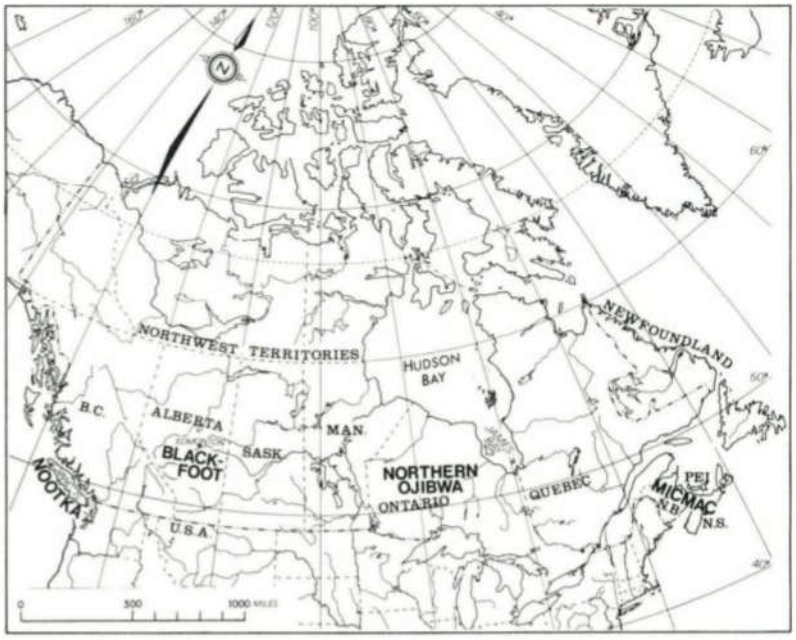
That is the Danish equivalent of 'taking in each other's washing'. The fact is that Denmark continues to pour men and money into the dependency many times as large as the mother country. The avowed intention is to bring the standard of living up to that of Denmark itself, even though Greenland has asked for and been granted limited home rule as of 1 May 1979, with a view to complete independence eventually.

The trip neared its end. Over drinks, my companions re-lived many incidents with backstairs wit and courage. To me, it had revived almost forgotten memories of famine and death and gruelling hardship, when only the fit survived. But for anyone who wants a taste of real dog-sledding in comfort, Angmagssalik is the place. ◆

The Helheims Glacier descending from Greenland's ice cap.

Doily, typical of Greenlandic head embroidery.

A mother and child at the church service in Angmagssalik.



INDIAN LIFE IN WINTER

Text by Edward S. Rogers. Illustrations by Lee R. Updike.

Dr Rogers is Curator, Department of Ethnology, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.
The work of Lee Updike has been published in a number of books, the most recent being 'The First People'.

WINTER, of all the seasons of the year, posed the greatest challenge for the Indians of Canada. They had to use every bit of their extensive ingenuity to survive. Even so, at times extreme hardships prevailed. Game animals were difficult to hunt, most birds had left for the south, fish restricted their movements and vegetation was dormant. Of the four groups — Micmac, Northern Ojibwa, Blackfoot and Nootka — life during the winter months was easiest for the Nootka; hardest for the Northern Ojibwa.

Many years have passed since the Micmac of Nova Scotia spent a winter as depicted here. Although few if any became assimilated into Euro-Canadian society, their lives have changed greatly since contact with the European, an event that occurred over four hundred years ago.

In former years, winter for the Micmac meant living in small family groups dispersed throughout the tribal territory. Their land was heavily forested and home to the moose, lynx, beaver, hare and many other species. As winter approached, the people abandoned their coastal camps and began travelling upstream along the various rivers that led into the interior, where they would remain until spring. As each party arrived its leader selected a location that would be suitable for the long winter months ahead. Here the women, working together, erected several conical lodges, one for each family. First, they carefully secured a number of long straight poles that were evenly erected in a circle and converged at the top to form a cone. Next, this framework was covered with birch-bark. Afterwards, the women gathered spruce or fir boughs with which to cover the earth floor, except in the centre where a space was left for an open fire. The smoke from the fire — one that was kept constantly burning — escaped through an opening left at the top of the lodge.

For the Micmac, life during the short dark days of winter was usually a struggle to find enough to eat. Ice fishing was one means to survive. In a favourable location, the fisherman cut a hole through the ice and surrounded it with several poles, the butt ends embedded in the ice and snow at such an angle that

they converged at the top where they were tied together. The frame was covered with hides. During the day, the fisherman sat within this enclosure on a piece of hide and waited and watched for fish. When one passed by, he attempted to spear it.

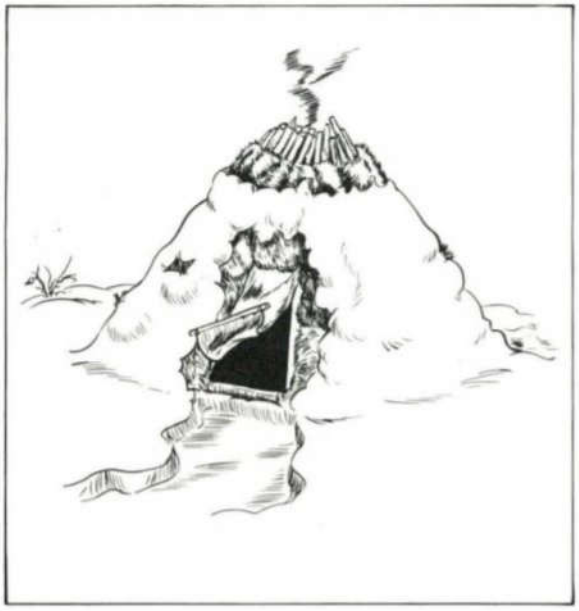
Big game animals were other sources of food. The Micmac considered the meat of moose the finest of any game they caught. When the snows became sufficiently deep, the Micmac hunter, wearing snowshoes, could run moose down and dispatch them. Bears, an occasional source of food, were considered almost sacred and had to be treated with great respect when being hunted, dressed, cooked and eaten. Sometimes during the winter a hibernating bear would be located. The animal was speared through the opening to its den and dragged from its lair. In January those Micmac who remained near the coast had an opportunity to kill seal.

Another animal of importance for its flesh and hide was the beaver. During the winter when the beaver's lodges were hidden under the snow, the Micmac used dogs trained for the task of finding them. At other times a medicine man would peer into a bowl of water and through deep concentration, he would perceive the location of the beaver lodges.

Once a lodge had been found the men cut a hole through the ice directly above the entrance to the lodge. At some distance from this hole, another was cut through the ice covering the pond. Here, one or two hunters took their stand to shoot any beaver that tried to escape. Their weapons consisted of a bow and arrow, the latter tipped with a harpoon head. One end of a cord was attached to the harpoon head and the other end was held by the hunter. Once these men were at their station, another went to the first hole where he lay down upon the ice. He then reached inside the

A Micmac medicine man could direct hunters to the location of beaver lodges by peering into a bowl of water. At other times trained dogs searched out the beaver.

A Northern Ojibwa hunter in winter clothing of woven rabbit skins and wearing wooden snowshoes. Below, his moss-covered winter lodge.



beaver lodge and sought to drag the beaver, one at a time, out onto the ice by their tails. The animals were then clubbed. Eventually, the remaining beaver became alarmed and left the lodge. Seeing the second hole in the ice, the fleeing beaver headed for it, but when they arrived at the hole, hunters were waiting. In this manner, all the beaver in one house could usually be dispatched.

Whenever an animal was killed, the women were expected to proceed immediately to the spot and, if it was a large animal, to butcher it where it had fallen. They then transported the meat and hide home. Smaller animals were brought back intact by the women to be dismembered later. The meat was cooked by roasting beside an open fire or stone boiling in large wooden troughs. The grease was saved and stored in birch-bark boxes or animal bladders.

The Northern Ojibwa inhabited the black spruce forests of northern Ontario; the country during the winter was blanketed deeply with snow and the many lakes and rivers were frozen solid. Like the Micmac, the Northern Ojibwa spent the winter living in small family groups, each within a circumscribed territory. But unlike the Micmac, they often travelled greater distances and moved their camps more frequently in search of food. The much harsher climatic conditions of Northern Ontario meant that resources were less abundant than in the Maritimes where the Micmac resided. Furthermore, by the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, caribou had become scarce and moose were virtually exterminated on the lands of the Northern Ojibwa. (Not until the present century did moose return in any number. Caribou, though, continued to be scarce.) The Northern Ojibwa therefore had to seek other sources of food. Instead of big game, they now subsisted primarily on fish, and hare when the latter were abundant, as they were about every seven years. Only occasionally did they have the opportunity of killing caribou or moose.

Winter camps were situated on the shores of fishing lakes and if possible near locations that abounded with hare. If any families continued to inhabit their fall camp, as occasionally some did, they most likely would still be living in moss-covered conical lodges. Toward the end of the nineteenth century some families began to replace these lodges with log cabins. Both types of shelters had to be vacated and left behind once their occupants began to move about the countryside in search of food. Then, portable lodges came into use. These consisted of conical and ridge-pole lodges covered with either spruce boughs, bark or canvas.

Winter clothing was made largely from hare skins. Rarely could the people secure sufficient hides of caribou and moose to make the type of clothing they had worn in former years. Moccasins might even be made of fish skins. The paucity of moose and caribou hides meant that the construction of laced snowshoes was curtailed. To overcome this situation, the

A Blackfoot man in winter clothing.

Northern Ojibwa began to make and wear wooden snowshoes.

At this time of year, fish — whitefish, pike, walleye and ling — provided the greatest amount of food for most of the people. But not all lakes contained large numbers of fish and small lakes might provide sufficient for only a week or two. When the catches became so small as not to be worth the effort, camp had to be struck and the group moved on to richer fishing grounds. Fishing through ice, as was necessary during the winter, was not easy at any time but was most difficult in late winter when the ice had reached its maximum thickness of three to five feet. In order to capture the fish, a gill-net had to be set under the ice. To accomplish this, several holes, twenty feet or so apart, were cut in a line from shore with an ice chisel. During the latter part of winter, trout were taken on set lines or by angling through a hole in the ice.

When hare were abundant, the entire group — men, women and children — worked together to set tossing-pole snares in favourable spots — especially in stands of Banksian pines. To encourage more hares to frequent the area, some of the smaller pines would be felled. Spring-pole snares could not be used in winter since the pole would freeze and become inoperative.

Even though big game was not numerous, moose and caribou would be sought whenever there were signs of their presence near the group's camp. Deep snows favoured hunting these animals, for then their movements were impeded, making it difficult for them to elude the hunters. A favourite method of hunting moose was by 'side-tracking'. Some Northern Ojibwa used a large stationary snare with which to capture moose.

The Blackfoot, a people of the high plains of Alberta, often found winter as difficult at times as did the Micmac and Northern Ojibwa. It was impossible for them to remain out on the open plains because of the bitterly cold winds that swept down from the north-west unopposed by any forest. Furthermore, the bison on which the Blackfoot depended for so much — food, clothing, utensils and containers, tools and shelter — had migrated south or had made their way in small groups into sheltered spots in the river valleys. The Blackfoot followed suit.

By late October or early November the band chief had selected the location where he and his followers would spend the winter. The large encampments of the summer and fall were abandoned and small parties or bands under the leadership of a chief made their way to their favourite river valley where the trees would provide protection from the winter winds and drifting snow. Here in a clearing, they erected their tipis. The site would be located near a stream where they could obtain drinking water for themselves and their horses, close to cottonwood trees for firewood and to grass for their horses. As it grew colder, camp was moved back into the woods for additional protection. Here the band remained for the rest of the winter. They would move camp only if they ran short of food for themselves or grass for their horses. If during the previous fall the hunters had been successful in killing a good many bison, there would be plenty of pemmican to sustain them and their families for the greater part of the winter. If the hunts had been poor, the men would be forced to spend much of their time in pursuit of whatever game could be found in the vicinity of camp. With luck they might secure bison, elk or mule deer; if not, they would have to seek smaller game.

The most difficult and precarious time of the year for the Blackfoot came toward the end of March. At this time, the bison began to move out of the valleys and up onto the plains where they would remain throughout the summer. The Blackfoot of necessity followed the herds or subsisted where possible on small game.

To withstand the winter's cold, the Blackfoot dressed warmly even though they were sheltered from the north wind. Their winter clothing was not elaborately decorated, contrary to the popular view of the Plains Indian. Men and boys, when venturing outside, donned bison-hide caps with ear flaps, bison robes with the hair worn next to the body and mittens and moccasins stuffed with animal hair. The women and girls wore undecorated dresses over which they threw bison robes or trade blankets. Their moccasins,

mittens, and caps were the same style as those worn by the men and boys.

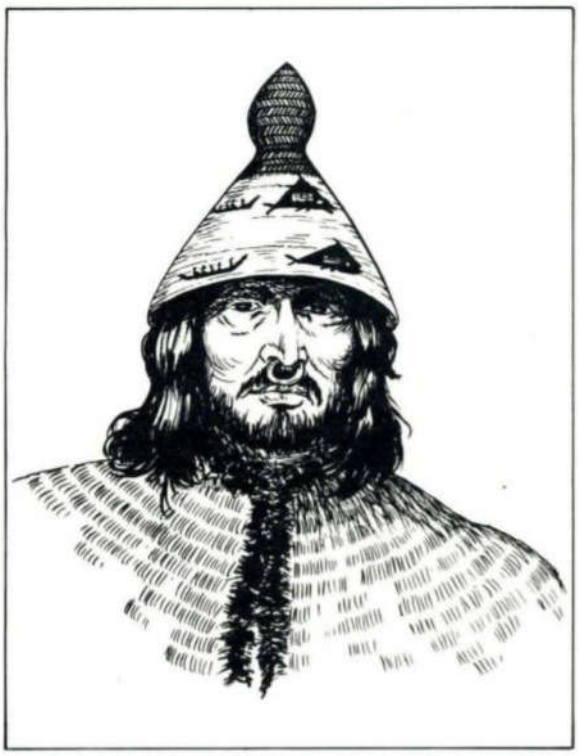
As the long winter slowly passed, the Blackfoot became increasingly concerned about spring. One way of lessening their anxiety was to keep track of the passage of time. To do this the owners of medicine bundles (usually the shaman) daily notched a stick and could then foretell about when winter would end.

Two and a half centuries or more after the Micmac had been contacted by Europeans, the Nootka were 'discovered'. At this time they lived in a series of villages located on the west side of Vancouver Island. Their environment was quite different from that of the Micmac, Northern Ojibwa and Blackfoot. They, in contrast to the others, were oriented and equipped to gain an abundance of food from the surrounding waters and to a much lesser extent from the land. The ocean provided whale, seal and varied salt-water fish; and the tidal zone, such foods as clams and crabs. Although the land provided the Nootka with little food, it did provide them with the necessary resources from which to fashion much of their material culture. The forests of giant trees were used to good advantage in the construction of their homes, household furnishings, and canoes.

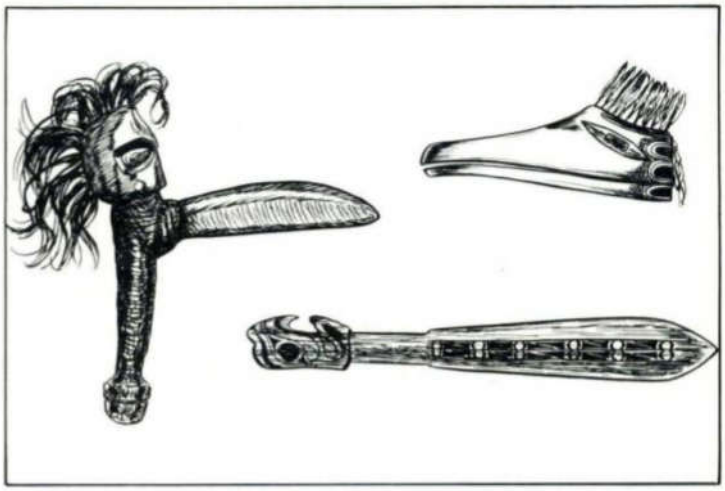
But winter on the outer coast of Vancouver Island was not attractive to a people who depended upon the use of the dugout canoe for travel and acquiring food. Because of strong winds, the ocean was in constant turmoil; cross currents made it choppy and dangerous to navigate. Such conditions lasted from early fall till late spring. Accordingly, those Nootka who had spent the summer along the coast moved back into sheltered coves on the upper reaches of the inlets for the winter.

During the course of any one year, the Nootka would occupy three principal villages. One, as noted, was inhabited during the winter and located in a sheltered spot at the head of an inlet. A second village was situated at the group's main salmon-fishing station on a particular stream and a third on the outer coast where most of the Nootka spent each summer. Although each Nootka group had three principal villages, families did not have complete houses in each village. The Nootka were economical. Extended

Nootka families, in homes of red-cedar siding with a winter's supply of dried salmon, had leisure time to engage in dancing and singing.



Nootka man wearing a spruce-root hat and a woven cedar-bark rain cape.



Nootka artifacts: slave killer (left) and whale bone club, and (above) a mask.

families erected a permanent house frame at each village site but moved the wall and roof boards every time they transferred their residence. The boards of red cedar were hung horizontally and overlapped like shingles on the four sides of the house. The roof planks were supported on a ridge pole and side plates to form a double-pitched roof but at such a low gradient that from a distance the roof appeared flat. With their large dugout canoes, it was not a difficult feat to transport the planks from one village site to another.

During the winter, the quest for food was at a virtual standstill. Earlier in the year, large quantities of food had been secured and preserved for use at this time. The men did do some hunting and fishing, primarily to relieve the monotony of eating dried salmon every day. Cod and several other bottom-feeding fish were caught and molluscs were collected at low tide. Winter was the time of year when land animals including elk, deer and black bear, were generally sought.

Since the Nootka did not, as a rule, have to spend a great deal of time in a search for food, they were free to engage in other activities during the winter months. Generally the Wolf Dance was staged at this time of the year. The beginning of this ceremony was heralded by the sound of large trumpet-like wooden instruments that represented the howling of the wolf spirits from the woods behind the village. Men in conventional wolf disguises then captured any novices about, usually children and youths. The captives were hidden for several days behind a large partition in the house in which the ceremony was being performed. During their seclusion they were taught their roles in the forthcoming ritual. As their training was being undertaken, a constant round of feasts and festivities that featured comic dances were engaged in by the villagers. These activities were organized more or less by sex and age. Just before the captives were to be returned, rafts were prepared by lashing planks across the gunwales of pairs of big canoes. At dawn on the appointed day, the wolf pack appeared on a point across the cove with their captives. This was accompanied by blasts on wooden horns. The villagers embarked on the rafts and in canoes and proceeded to the point where they engaged in a mock battle with the wolf pack until the captives were retrieved. The children had now been initiated by the wolf spirits and received certain privileges. Finally the day came when the novices demonstrated the supernatural gifts they had received from the wolf spirits. Each sang a hereditary spirit song, danced, displayed a crest or announced a hereditary name he had received. A potlatch ended the performances. Soon thereafter it would be time to get ready for the arrival of spring with its own demands for survival.

This article is the first in a series of four following the seasons of the year and based on the lives of the Micmac, Northern Ojibwa, Blackfoot and Nootka. The second article 'Indian Life in Spring' will appear in the next issue. ◆

'Cloud Cap'.

Artist Geoffrey Armstrong at Pangnirtung Pass, Baffin Island.

ARCTIC Landscapes

Text by
Sheila Cole

GEOFFREY ARMSTRONG of Toronto, artist and architect, has recently developed an interest in the strange, forbidding and undeniable beauty of the North. He pursues and captures it on canvas.

'When you get to the Arctic it overpowers you; the unbelievable variety up there, the very arid desert of the Keewatin area, compared to the fierceness of the glaciers coming right down to the sea in other places. And the struggle . . . a wildflower — the way it has its protection so it can just survive, or an Arctic poppy — how it turns its head to the sun.'

Armstrong notices the intricacies of the environment, but consciously avoids detail in his paintings. He tries to create the 'mood' of the North. Painting each canvas is like taking another journey back into that vast, dramatic landscape.

His latest trip was in August 1979 when the Hudson's Bay Company offered him a seat on one of their charter planes. He went aboard a Hawker Sidley 748 in Timmins and for three weeks flew with the pilots along their regular supply route to Pangnirtung, Broughton Island, Clyde River, Pond Inlet and back again. He stopped for a week when he arrived at Pond Inlet and spent a second week in the Pangnirtung area, taking slides and hiking in Auyuittuq National Park near by.

'Floating Clouds'.

Flying around Baffin Island opened up hundreds of aerial vistas. As a result of this exposure, some of Armstrong's paintings have an aerial depth, as though seen looking down through thin layers of cloud. Other canvasses capture dramatic height from the ground — sweeping up the sides of hulking mountains. While travelling Armstrong concentrates on absorbing as much of the essence of the environment as possible. Then back in his studio he paints the feelings he remembers. Working in acrylics on canvas or paper, the subtlety of colour absorbs him. Controlling it allows shape and form to become more important and a delicate balance is achieved.

'Each painting grows as I paint it. I don't start off with a preconceived idea or a sketch. It's a free method and it's hard to predetermine what might happen.'

Many people, it appears, respond to the scenes that Armstrong has transferred to canvas; they like what they see and feel. In October he had a successful show at the Roberts Gallery in Toronto. He is also represented by galleries in Edmonton, Montreal, Fredericton and Halifax.

Where does architecture fit into the picture? Actually, it takes up half of the work week. He and three partners form the Company of Armstrong and

'Soft Snows'.

Molesworth Architects. Their work ranges from private residential design to a 340-bed chronic-care hospital, to the renovation and expansion of existing buildings for the National Ballet of Canada.

Armstrong the architect, who constantly works with concrete dimensions, is amazed by the varying sizes of things in the North. Vast expanses of landscape appeal to his artistic temperament.

'The scale of the Arctic and the lack of it absolutely intrigues me. You can't understand how big or how small something is. You don't know if a rock is the size of a house or a car.' Like most people who enter the vast, mysterious land of the Inuit, Geoffrey Armstrong plans to return.

Sheila Cole of Halifax, N.S., is a free-lance journalist.◆

'Last dog train leaving Lower Fort Garry, 1909.' Dog drivers vied with one another in the appearance, speed and stamina of their dogs. Painting by Charles Comfort, HBC Collection.

James McCook, retired associate editor of the 'Ottawa Journal', has written numerous articles on the history of the HBC, and Western Canada.

Man's Best Friend?

By James McCook

THE SNOBBERY of Indian and Eskimo sled dogs surprised and disappointed early fur traders on Hudson Bay. The newcomers admired the devoted service the animals gave, pulling sleds and carrying loads. They noted that the dogs were left to fend for themselves in periods of idleness and had to survive by ranging the countryside and eating everything from birds' nests to scraps cast up by the sea. The traders naturally assumed that these undemanding beasts would be happy to serve them.

Nothing of the kind!

Andrew Graham, who served with the Hudson's Bay Company on the Bay from 1749 to 1775, observed that the dogs were as useful to the natives as horses were to the Europeans. They assisted in the hunting of deer and their keen sense of smell enabled them to lead their masters to beaver lodges. James Isham, who was also with the Company on Hudson Bay in the 18th century, was impressed by the ability of a single dog to haul a fortnight's provisions for two men. This was a factor of growing importance, as Hudson's Bay Company policy was encouraging the establishment of inland posts far from the sea.

But the dogs would not serve the traders, not even when the white men took them into the forts as puppies and raised them kindly. They regarded the traders with fear and hostility, and amiable and co-operative Newfoundland dogs had to be imported from England to perform work around the posts.

The Newfoundland dogs often mated with wolves and the traders waited confidently for their pups to show them goodwill. It was no use, Graham reported. The offspring retained the 'moroseness' of the wolves.

In time, of course, the mixing of breeds and familiarity with the traders led to the development of dogs which deigned to take commands from Europeans. In the meantime, traders who used native dogs had to hire Indians or Eskimos to drive them.

The other complaint about native dogs concerned their skill and audacity in thieving. Their way of life, which so often left them in a barren land where only the swift and venturesome could survive, made them reckless. A placid Newfoundland might be trusted alone with a piece of meat meant for its master's supper, but a sled dog could not even be trusted with meat in a tin. Robert J. Flaherty, prospector and film-maker on Hudson Bay, left a shocking account of the transformation of handsome, diligent sled dogs into wild creatures as they tore open cans of meat, heedless of the cuts they suffered from the metal.

The yarns about thieving dogs were endless. Whips, harness and gloves were carried off and chewed as a matter of course. A prairie guide had a fine elk-skin coat and slept in it in cold weather. One morning he awoke to find that his dog had eaten his coat off his back, leaving only the collar and cuffs. A rancher slept under a buffalo robe and discovered in the morning that two dogs from his team had devoured it all except the hair.

A tobacco pipe was reduced to splinters by a dog who believed for a moment that it had found a delicacy. One raider in a tent ate almost 20 pounds of lard and staggered off with the rest. Tins of molasses were spilled by disappointed dogs. Stewed fruit was hardly a dog's delight, but if there was nothing better, down it went.

The four-legged robbers were all over the country, but the parties of surveyors and missionaries who made their way up James and Hudson Bay by boat, left some of the most vivid accounts of annoying experiences with marauding dogs, reinforced in that region by hordes of vicious mosquitoes.

It was customary to tie up on shore at night. There dogs from Indian encampments would frequently pounce on the strangers. Tarpaulin covers were ripped off anything left outside the tent. Wolfish dogs prowled about in the dark, seeking a gap in the defenses. Unguarded kettles of food were carried off — it was claimed that dogs would run off with kettles and pans containing food and keep them upright without losing a mouthful.

The victory of the dogs and mosquitoes was complete when, in the middle of the night, the weary travellers would leave their tents, board the boats and move out into the bay seeking relief from their tormentors.

At other places where settlement was more advanced, dogs often gave strangers an unfriendly welcome, although they did not rob them. Reverend A. A. Boddy visited the Sarcee Indian Reserve, near Calgary and recalled that nearly 50 dogs rushed out, howling and showing their teeth. Then, he added, 'they

Max Sauer, Hudson's Bay Company Collection

Huskies at Port Harrison in the 1930s do a bit of plundering.

noticed that we carried stones in our hands for their benefit and then suddenly they retired.'

Having seen what could happen to any creature that got between a northern dog and food, those who worked with dogs treated them with a degree of caution. Still, the drivers usually came to feel affection for their loyal servants and to boast about their achievements.

Governor George Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company, who seldom showed sympathy to man or beast, went so far as to comment that sled dogs 'had no sinecure'. That, in a way, was a warm tribute. The final service given by dogs, the Governor could have added, was to be killed and eaten in hard times. And not necessarily in hard times only. In territories where buffalo steaks were hard to come by the Indians feasted on dog meat and taught the traders to share this practice.

Missionaries were among those who had to learn that sled dogs were not placid pets. None of the missionaries had a more difficult experience with dogs than the Reverend E. J. Peck and his assistant, who lived in a small mission hut on Blacklead Island in Cumberland Sound, Baffin Island. To enable the Eskimos to attend church services under shelter the missionaries built a larger building near their hut, making use of light wood and, because they had nothing else, nailing seal-skins to the wooden frame to serve as a covering.

For some time over the winter, poor weather had prevented fishing, and by the end of January 1895 the Eskimos and their dogs were suffering from near-starvation. At 3 a.m. one morning Reverend Peck and his assistant were awakened by a pack of hungry dogs.

'These creatures had managed to climb up on the roof of our skin church, and to our dismay were tearing the edifice to pieces . . . We were literally besieged by dogs, and they must in all have numbered over a hundred. Most of them were on the roof, some had fallen through, others were devouring pieces of sealskin, and altogether such a confused mass of dogs — young, old, bruised and wounded — it would be hard to find anywhere else. After a sharp battle we managed to put these unwelcome visitors to flight . . .'

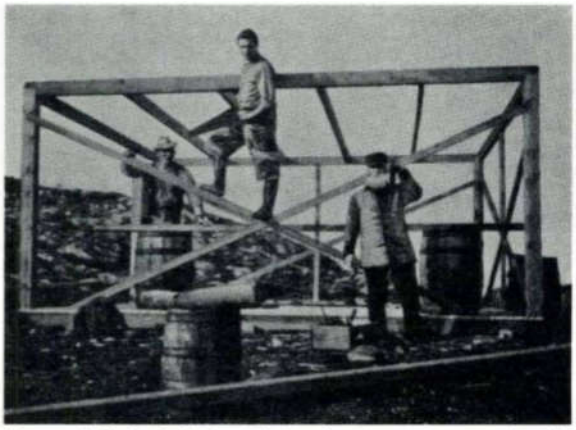
When the incident was later recounted to a class of girls in Scotland, one young woman remarked 'Now that we have heard of a kirk being eaten by dogs, it is not hard to believe that a whale could have swallowed Jonah'.

Some missionaries, such as the Methodist Reverend John McDougall and the Roman Catholic Father Lacombe, were expert dog drivers who thought little of covering 50 miles a day. Other missionaries were as useless on the trail as bags of snow. The Anglican Canon William Newton described how in winter he was wrapped up in skins and placed in a carriole, a box shaped like a long cradle attached to the bottom board of the sled. There, warm but unable to move, he lay motionless while someone else drove the dogs and ran with the sled. Newton wrote that 'you are perfectly quiet, and have nothing to do, uphill, downhill or on level ground, except to observe the dogs, the drivers and the scenery.'

One of McDougall's burdens was the much respected Methodist preacher, Reverend Thomas Woolsey, who was no help at all when travelling. On one occasion McDougall undertook to drive two teams at once, breaking trail with one while the second, carrying Woolsey, followed. It was a disaster. Dogs in the Woolsey team soon realized he had no control over them. The lead dog took it easy. The quarrelsome snapped at each other. When the sled ran down a slope the dogs made no effort to keep ahead of it, and the harness became tangled. Fights became more furious, and finally Woolsey, dogs and sled were a tangled mass at the bottom of the hill. McDougall had to leave his own team, unwrap Woolsey, sort out the harness, and drive the Woolsey team long enough to remind the dogs of their duty with his whip.

Widely distributed was the story of the driver who told a missionary that his dogs would not improve their slow pace because he could not swear at them in the presence of a reverend gentleman. It was said that the missionary told the driver to use whatever language was necessary to speed progress, and apparently, the bad language always worked!

Indeed, the dogs constantly found new ways of making their masters swear. A heavy overnight snowfall gave a team such an opportunity. The drivers could not locate the dogs buried in snow, and not one animal made a move to betray its location until a man stumbled over it.



Reverend E. J. Peck (at right) and assistants constructing the church on Blacklead Island that was later 'eaten' by dogs.

The bells attached to the harness gave dog teams a totally false impression of Christmassy goodwill. The lead dog ruled because of superior intelligence and strength, and when necessary, reminded rebels of his authority. Lesser dogs grumbled and snapped at companions. Lazy dogs tried to avoid pulling their fair share of the load.

Strangers who saw Indians moving camp, with most of the burdens carried by dogs directed by the women, were surprised at the noise — the growls and howls, the whines and whimpers, the sounds of general complaint made by as many as 500 dogs. The visitors also discovered that the silence of the night would be disturbed by one restless dog, and that the cry would be taken up by others of his kind and by the wolves and coyotes running free.

The buffalo-hunters and the explorers from Britain who visited the prairies in the 1840s and later, left detailed accounts of experiences with dogs.

The Earl of Southesk, who travelled west to the Rocky Mountains in 1859-60, had high hopes for a formidable-looking beast he thought would fight wolves. One night he had just snuggled down when the dog rushed into his tent and crouched beside the bed quivering. In hot pursuit came a large white wolf, which was later shot by a guide.

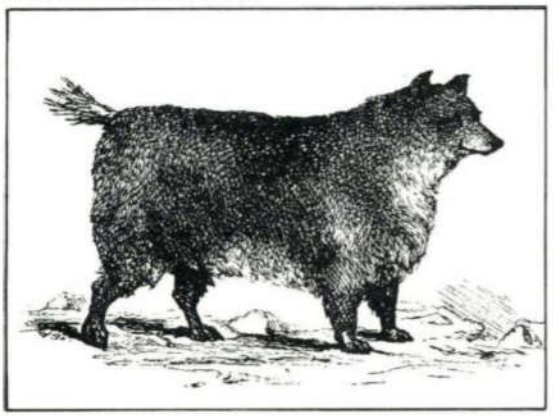
Between Carlton House and Fort Edmonton Southesk acquired another dog which proved to be an amusing companion. This was a black Indian sleigh-dog named 'Whisky', 'as fat as a pig, and possessed of only four inches of tail'. The fondness which Southesk developed for this comical animal is evident in his description: 'Poor Whisky filled the place of the ancient domestic jester; one look at him dispelled melancholy; every movement he made was a farce. With his cunningly timorous countenance and sleekly rounded plebeian body, he was a true Sancho Panza of

dogs. He was a daily delight: I would not have exchanged him for the best dog in the Company's territories.'

When Southesk travelled through mountainous country Whisky, in spite of his bulk, developed a 'mania' for climbing — although he squeaked with fear upon coming to the difficult places, and on one occasion narrowly escaped being crushed by a falling ram which Southesk had shot.

When the party reached Fort Edmonton, Whisky deserted, 'preferring ignoble ease at the Fort to our good society'. Southesk felt Whisky would live to regret this choice once he was forced to resume the toilsome life of a sleigh-dog.

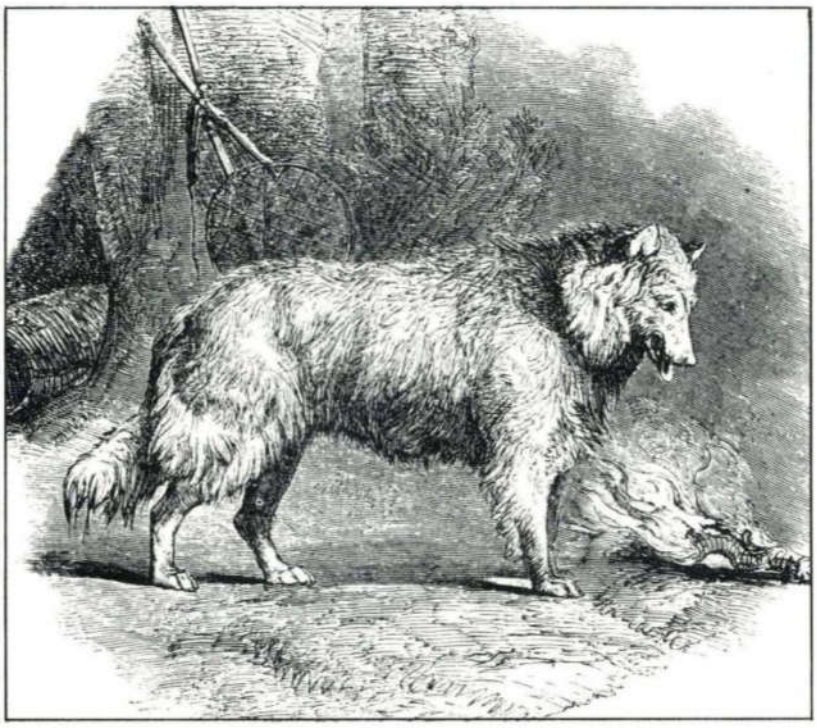
'Whisky', described by the Earl of Southesk as 'a true Sancho Panza of dogs'.

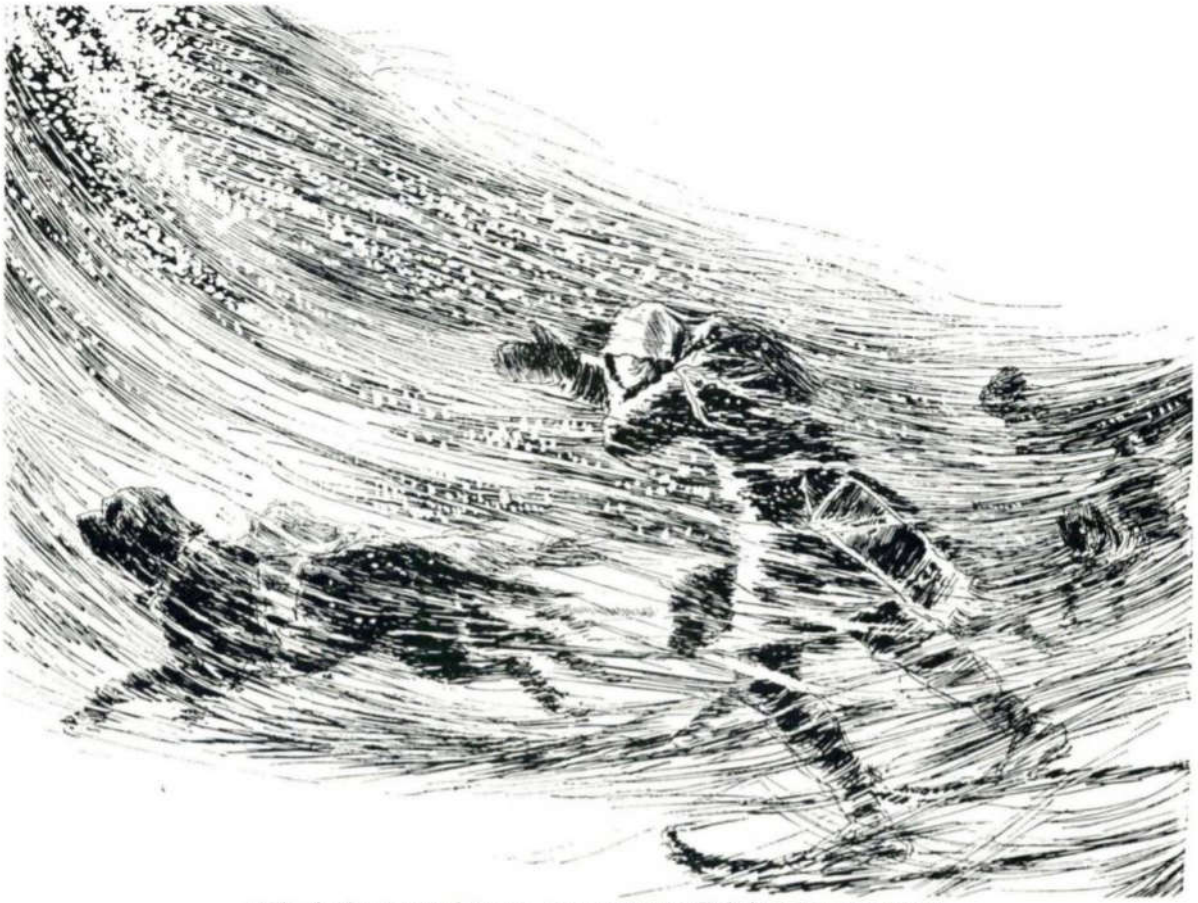


The hunter and explorer Captain John Palliser purchased a large white dog named 'Ishmah' from an Indian couple. Ishmah was to be his sole companion on a nine-month excursion through the wilds of Montana and North Dakota in 1847-48. At first the dog would not come within 250 yards of him or any other white man, but Palliser patiently tempted him with pieces of meat until Ishmah gave him his trust. Palliser later commented that 'a more faithful, efficient, and devoted creature never breathed'.

Ishmah struggled through deep snow from morning to night pulling Palliser's heavily laden travois. 'When supper was at last cooked and despatched (quickly enough on his part, poor fellow, for his share was sometimes very scanty), he sat up close beside me as I smoked my pipe and sipped my coffee; and when at last

'Ishmah', faithful companion of Captain John Palliser.





'Jack', the dog Reverend Egerton Ryerson Young called 'the noblest of them all', led Young to safety when he was lost in a blizzard

I got into bed he used to lie down at the edge of the robe with his back close up against my shoulders, and so we slept till morning.'

There were times, however, when even the admirable Ishmah fell from grace. On one occasion he ran off to gambol in the forest with a she-wolf. Unfortunately at the time he was harnessed to the travois containing all of Palliser's possessions, leaving his master in a serious predicament, stranded 100 miles from the nearest known habitation. Then, after several anxious hours the 'panting rascal' returned to his side. 'I never felt so relieved, and laughed out loud from sheer joy, as I noticed the consciousness he showed by his various cringing movements of having behaved very badly. I was too well pleased, however, at his reappearance to beat him, particularly when I found nothing of his harness and load either missing or injured in the slightest degree. Even the portion of meat which I had secured from the last deer I shot was untouched . . .'

Ishmah had less conscience about stealing food from strangers. On his way home from the prairies Palliser took Ishmah to his hotel in St Louis. The dog lay at his feet in the dining room, but 'not content with beholding his master enjoying the good things of this life' crept up to the dishes on the sideboard and helped himself to a calf's head 'with which savoury prize he decamped at racing speed, his bushy tail stretching out, like a fox's brush, behind him; the waiters merely pointing after him and winking to one another, evidently enjoying the joke.'

The story of one completely satisfactory partnership between man and dog comes from the Canadian West. Reverend Egerton Ryerson Young and a companion were travelling across the ice on Lake Winnipeg when they were caught in a severe blizzard, and became lost while many miles from shore. The travellers were in danger of freezing to death. What to do?

The missionary 'had a talk' with his sled dog 'Jack', a 160-pound black St Bernard described by his owner as 'the noblest of them all'. Young informed Jack that the chances were against the dog ever again having the opportunity to stretch out on the rug before the study fire unless he could lead them to a place of shelter. Jack led the travellers through the raging storm and many hours later brought them safely to an Indian encampment on shore. Of course. *Noblesse oblige.*◆

York Factory to St Boniface on Foot, 1836-37

By Pierre-Louis Morin d'Equilly

Translated by Hubert G. Mayes

The following is an account of a journey made on snowshoes from York Factory to St Boniface in the winter of 1836-37. The author, Pierre-Louis Morin d'Equilly, (later member of the Geographical Society, Chevalier de l'Ordre du Lys, and Director of the Land Titles Service of Canada) was a young seminary teacher in Paris. In 1836 he met Bishop Joseph Norbert Provencher who was visiting France, and was persuaded to come to St Boniface to serve as a missionary.

Bishop Provencher made arrangements for Morin to travel on a Hudson's Bay Company ship, the 'Eagle' which sailed on 1 June 1836. Because of bad weather the ship arrived two months late (18 October) and the boats for Red River had left in mid-September to avoid the ice. Morin and a group of Hudson's Bay Company employees and Indians set out on foot on 8 December 1836. They reached Oxford House on 16 December (temperature -46.5° C.) and Norway House on 24 December. Leaving Norway House on 4 February Morin arrived at St Boniface on 13 February 1837, having covered a total distance of about 1,000 kilometres.

This translation from the French by Hubert G. Mayes, associate professor of French at the University of Winnipeg, is from part of the Morin manuscript 'De Paris au Lac Ouinipègue en 1837'. The manuscript had been annotated by the author's grandson, the Québécois poet Paul Morin, who read the account to the Royal Society of Canada in 1927. It was subsequently published in the Society's 'Proceedings and Transactions' for that year.

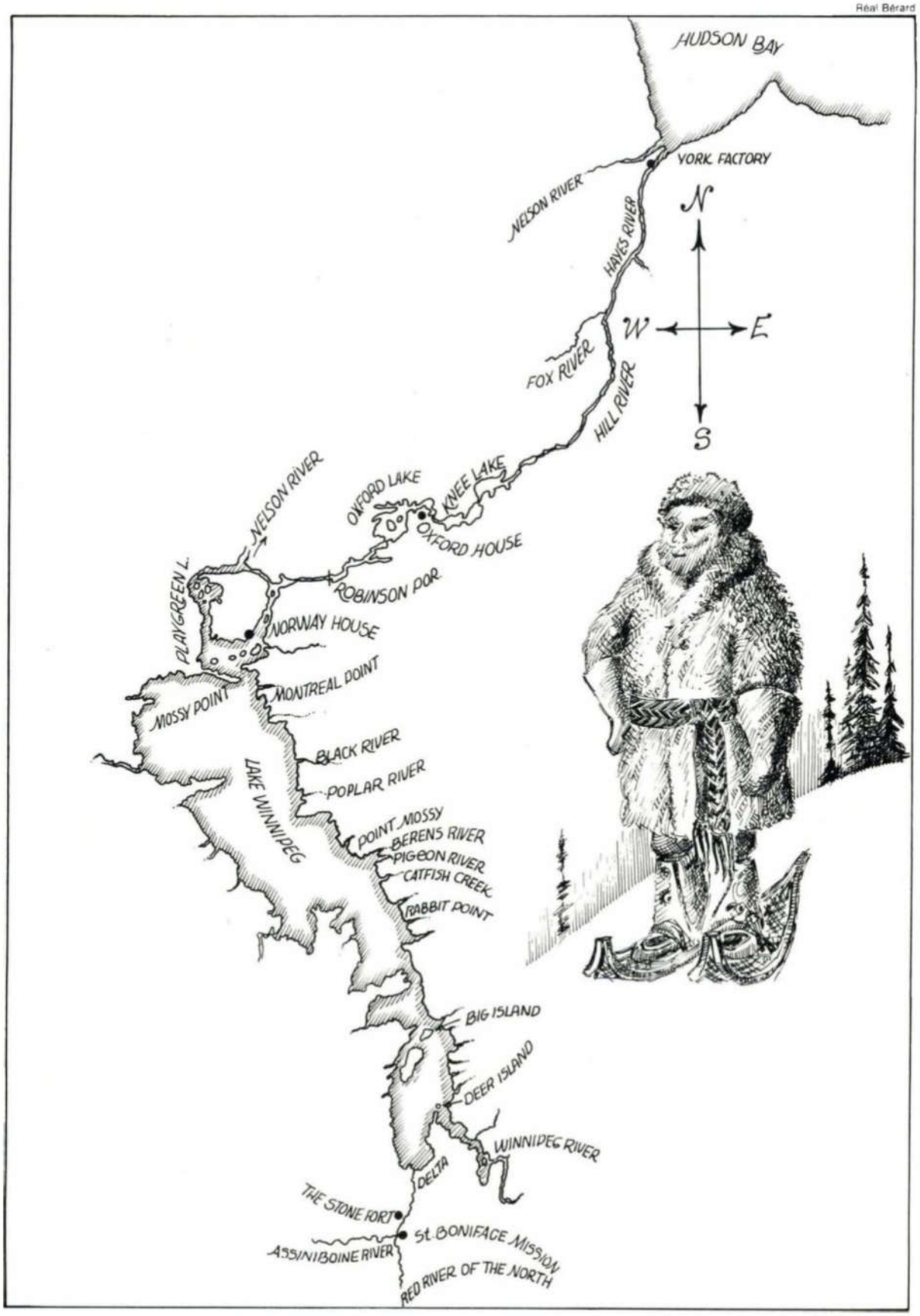
Sketches accompanying the article were made by George E. Finlay between 1846 and 1848, and are reproduced by courtesy of the Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta.

THE [YORK] FACTORY ENCLOSURE is surrounded by a palisade twelve feet high, solidly constructed of pine. In front of this enclosure there is a platform on which three cannons are mounted, as well as a very high pole at the top of which flies the English flag. At the base of the platform a dock has been constructed. Within this huge establishment spruce logs have been used to build living quarters for the officers of the Company, the clerks and the tradesmen. The last mentioned include carpenters, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, makers of harness for the sled dogs, and makers of sleds and snowshoes.

There are several fur depots where all the pelts coming from the North-Western Territory are carefully and symmetrically stored. There is also a large warehouse for the use of families scattered across this vast country. It was here that I obtained the necessary clothing for my expedition from York to St Boniface. It consisted of a pair of trousers which came right up to my shoulders, a kind of tunic covering the whole body from the top of the neck to below the knees, a vest of muskrat skin, an otter-skin hat, moccasins, long mittens made in such a way that the thumb is not separated from the fingers, other clothes made of caribou hide and lined with a very thick, soft flannel, a multi-coloured sash, decorated leggings or *mitasses* and finally, beautiful snowshoes sturdily fashioned by an Indian named Cadieu [or Cadien. The writing here is illegible.] who had lived in the country lying close to the Rocky Mountains.

Accused of a triple murder, this poor wretch was chained like a ferocious animal and lay on a bed of straw in a room of the blacksmith's [The blacksmith was named Demers] house. He was later taken to Montreal to be tried. The courts of this city, Three Rivers and Quebec declared themselves incompetent to try Cadieu. He was then sent to England where it

Réal Bérard


HUDSON BAY
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NELSON RIVER
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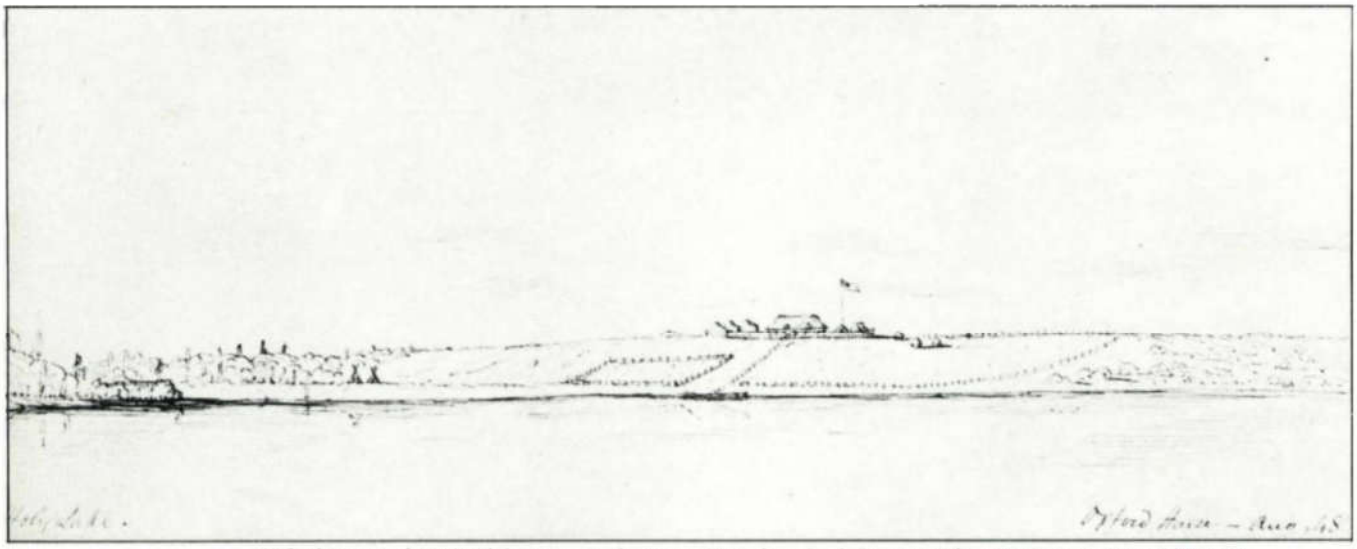
OXFORD LAKE
KNEE LAKE
OXFORD HOUSE
PLAYGREEN L.
ROBINSON POR.
NORWAY HOUSE
MOSSY POINT
MONTREAL POINT
BLACK RIVER
POPLAR RIVER
LAKE WINNIPEG
POINT MOSSY
BERENS RIVER
PIGEON RIVER
CATFISH CREEK
RABBIT POINT
BIG ISLAND
DEER ISLAND
WINNIPEG RIVER
DELTA
THE STONE FORT
St. BONIFACE MISSION
ASSINIBOINE RIVER
RED RIVER OF THE NORTH



Oxford House, about 364 kilometres up the Haves River from York Factory. When Pierre-Louis Morin d'Equilly and his party arrived here on 16 December 1836 the temperature was -46.5° C.

was proven that if he had killed three men it was in order to defend his honour and that of his wife — a beautiful Métisse, people said — whom some miserable scoundrels had tried to take away from him for the use of a factor. This worthy Indian was acquitted [and sent back to Canada at the expense of the Hudson's Bay Company].

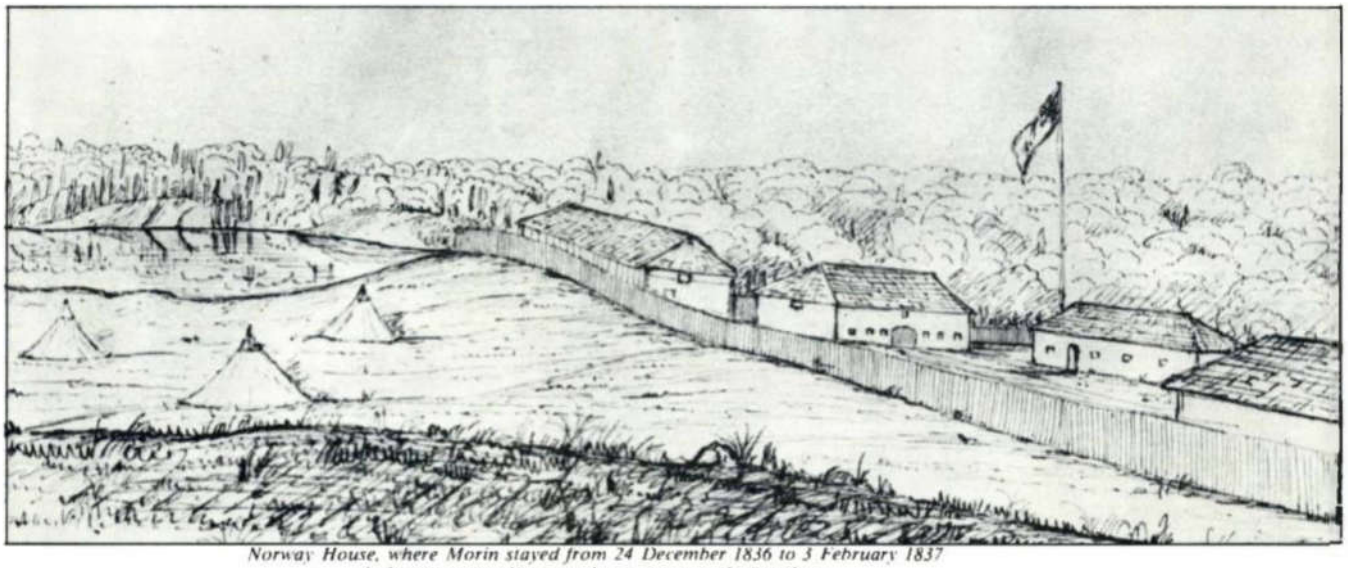
Towards mid-November I was informed that if I had letters to send to Canada or to Europe, the mail would leave York December 1. I therefore wrote to Monsignor de Juliopolis [Bishop Joseph Norbert Provencher, earlier described by Morin as a 'titanic prelate . . . a giant, astonishingly crowned with a tiny head'] in Quebec to tell him of my arrival at the Factory and the result of my trip, and I described to him the damage suffered by the ship which had brought me. I added that I was happy to be able to assure him that the boxes containing the vestments, such as a mitre, chasubles and dalmatics, and about a thousand books were intact and stored at the factory in a dry, safe place. I added that I was going to undertake the trip from York to St Boniface on snowshoes.

The letters dispatched from the factory for England left York December 1. Two Muskegon Indians were entrusted with this mission which they would carry out by relaying each other from one Company post to the next all the way to Bytown. To cover this very long route, our men followed the south-west shore-line of Hudson's Bay, calling at the posts at Severn, Albany, and Moose Factory, a trading post situated at the end of James Bay. From here, heading towards the south, the postmen had to cross over the height of land which separates the waters draining into Hudson's Bay from those that flow to the Ottawa River. The distance from York to Montreal by the places mentioned above is 2816 kilometres (1750 English miles).

Towards the end of November it was decided by the Council that Mr and Miss Lewis, accompanied by Mr Charles Ross, would leave York December 8 to return to their respective posts. I asked to be included in the party in order to be in St Boniface at the beginning of March. My request was granted, but it was suggested to me that it would perhaps be rash on my part to undertake such a long and difficult journey; that I would have to endure much hardship, extreme cold, violent winds and snow storms, and that I would most certainly regret having cut short my comfortable stay at York.

I pointed out to the people who took such an affectionate interest in my welfare that the boats which had left the colony to come and pick up the people at York who were on their way to Fort Garry had had to go back to their place of departure about the middle of September. This was done to avoid the ice which at this time of year starts to form on the rivers and lakes that have to be followed in order to reach upper Lake Winnipeg. I added that if I did not undertake the journey now I would have to wait for their return, much too long a period for it would mean postponing my expedition until the next year.

Our caravan left York on December 8 [1836]. It was composed of Mr and Miss Lewis, Mr Ross and myself. Each of us had a servant. There were also three native guides to drive the sleds, six Scottish tradesmen for work to be done in British Columbia and two Muskegons to break a trail for us through the forests, the swamps and the small frozen lakes which we would find on our route. Our effects and the equipment essential for travellers who have to journey through these terrible regions during the winter were placed



Norway House, where Morin stayed from 24 December 1836 to 5 February 1837 before resuming his snowshoe journey to St Boniface.

with care and attention to distribution of weight on a sled 2.30 metres long (7 ft. 6 ins. English). On this sled I took note of the following articles: clothing, snowshoes, guns, a small set of cooking utensils, tobacco, peace pipe, tea, sugar, rum, moose meat, slices of buffalo hump meat, grease, big biscuits and flour. All these articles were contained in tin boxes and the others rolled up in tarpaulins. The full load of my sled, including the weight of the sled, might have been a hundred kilos (220 English pounds), but my two Eskimo dogs pulled it over the snow without appearing tired on our arrival at camp in the evening. These animals, used by all the factories in the North-West, are very strong and capable of extremely hard work. They have an advantage over other dogs in that they require less food and seldom suffer from sore feet on their winter travels, a condition which, more than anything else, causes sled dogs to suffer from exhaustion.

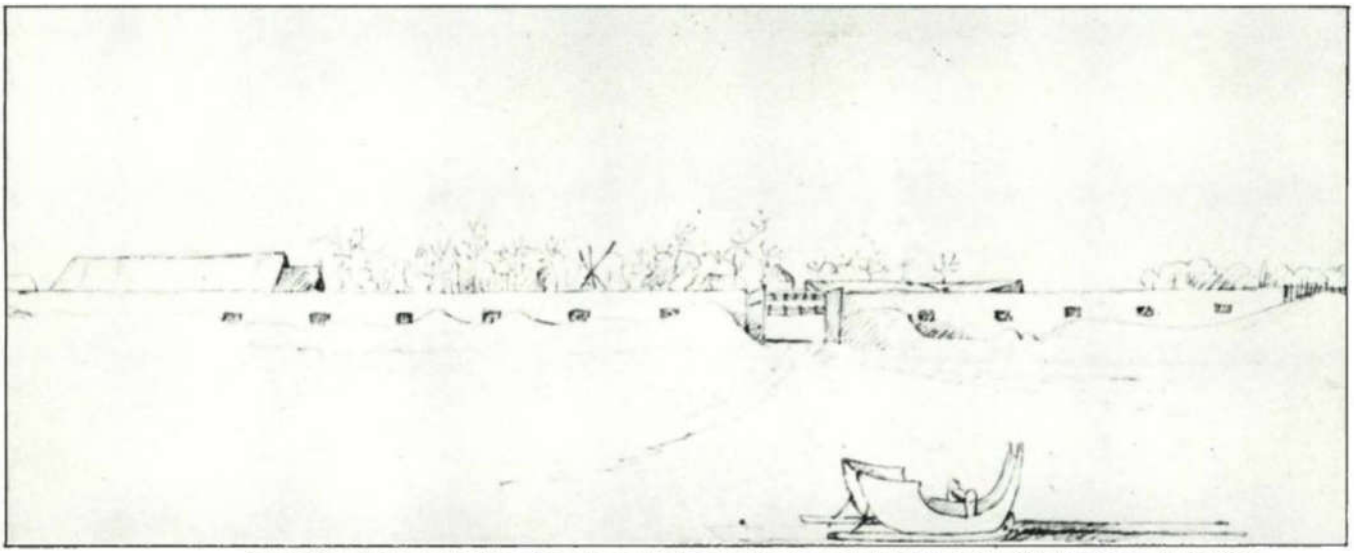
Wearing snowshoes, our party set out on the Hayes River which was solidly frozen and covered with dry snow to a depth of twenty centimetres. We followed this watercourse as far as the Fox River, its principal tributary. The woods on the hillsides washed by the Hayes River had recently been ravaged by fire which had swept through this whole area from the aforementioned river up to the right bank of the Nelson River, and from east to west over a distance of 25 kilometres. It took us four days to cover 145 kilometres (90 miles). At the mouth of the Fox River the Hayes River changes name and becomes the Hill River. The source of this river is in Oxford Lake, or Holy Lake, a body of water which is linked with Knee Lake and Swampy Lake. After following the Fox River for a distance of 80 kilometres, we came upon a road laid out in a straight line, a hundred kilometres by five metres. [The intended meaning is obviously 'a hundred kilometres long and five metres wide'.] It was opened by the Hudson's Bay Company to facilitate the transportation of wood intended for the construction of the factory which we had left.

The 16th of December, having arrived at the south-west end of this road, and before crossing Lake Oxford, we placed in the fork of a tree two double alcohol thermometers (Fahrenheit), instruments which were made expressly for the use of the North-West posts. At eight o'clock in the morning we took a reading of 52 degrees below zero (46.5 degrees Centigrade), in other words, six degrees below the freezing point of mercury.

Leaving Knee Lake to our left, we arrived, almost crystallized by this excessive cold, at Oxford House about one hour after noon. Mr Todd, the head of this little factory, welcomed us and received us cordially. We stayed two days with this kindly gentleman. Mrs Todd was suffering from a kind of melancholy, a cruel illness contracted after a stay of several years in this desolate country. This Oxford House is situated on a cliff high above the river of the same name . . . . Its distance from York Factory is 364 kilometres (226 miles).

After leaving on the morning of the 19th of December, we camped in the evening at the south-west end of Lake Oxford, a body of water which is very deep and 40 kilometres (25 miles) long. Its shoreline is irregular. It is rich in excellent fish: trout are abundant and of enormous size.

To get from our camp to the big factory at Norway we had to pass through a forbidding region where the chaos of primitive times seemed to appear in its most



Lower Fort Garry, or the 'Stone Fort', from which point Morin travelled the remaining 32 kilometres to St Boniface in a sleigh mounted on runners, the first he had seen.

fearsome and horrible aspects. In spite of formidable obstacles, and in spite of the fatigue which we experienced on Little Pine Lake where a violent snow storm blinded us, we were able to reach Franklin River, which we followed for a long distance. Having crossed Robinson Portage, we followed the shores of the Ouinépagoussi River and Lake and, after passing through clumps of pine trees, arrived at Norway House on December 24.

We were welcomed very cordially by the manager of the post, Mr Ross. Mrs Ross, a beautiful Scots lady, born in Montreal, was extremely kind to me.

Norway was the westernmost point of my American travels . . . 7609 kilometres — 4728 miles — from Paris. This main factory of the Company, after York, is located on an island in the Rivière de la Mer which is simply the head of the Nelson River, formerly called Bourbon River, and near the mouth of Brochet River which flows into little Lake Pélé [now Playgreen Lake]. In the winter the climate is extremely harsh, the proximity of Hudson's Bay causing a marked lowering of the temperature. Furthermore, all this part of the country is exceedingly poor. During the 42 days I spent at Norway [from December 24 to February 3] there were six times that the temperature in Fahrenheit dropped below the freezing point of mercury.

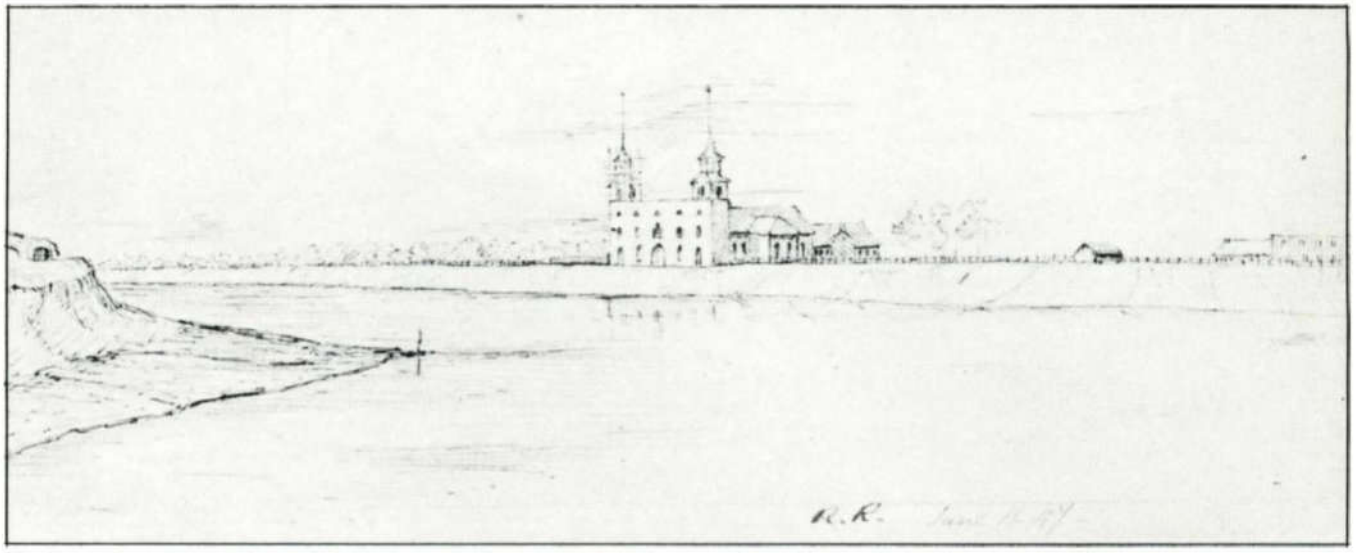
The Nelson is a fast-flowing river which has its source in Lake Pélé. It drains the whole basin of the Winnipeg [spelled throughout Ouinipégue], an immense plain whose boundaries extend from the upper reaches of the Saint Lawrence to those of the Mississippi and the Missouri, continuing along the Rockies, first to the edges of the Arctic basin, then to those of the intermediate basin. It offers magnificent sights, owing partly to the variety of its waterfalls, partly to the turbulence of its rapids. This is easy to understand, since its volume of water crosses the Laurentian mountains, which have actually lost much of their height, but nevertheless have enough left to give infinite variety of the appearance of one of the world's great rivers. This majestic watercourse is therefore of no use. Over a length of 570 kilometres it has a drop of 214 metres (702 feet) from its source to its mouth on Hudson's Bay.

On January 4, 1837, Messrs Ross and Lewis left Norway for Fort Garry, the administrative centre of the Red River Colony. One of them was kind enough to be the bearer of a letter which I sent to the St Boniface mission informing the director of my arrival at Norway, and asking for help and protection on the long trip from the factory to my intended destination. This letter arrived at the Fort on the 14th and the next day it was in the hands of the director, who gave orders to make the necessary preparations to go and fetch me at Norway.

Two French Métis, supplied with provisions to cross Lake Winnipeg and return, left the mission on the 19th and arrived at Norway on the 29th. These worthy fellows, after four days of rest at the factory, expressed their desire to return to St Boniface, which I agreed to wholeheartedly.

I said good-bye to Mrs Ross, to Dr Todd and his wife and to Mrs and Miss Lewis. The last named were Métis women, very friendly and most helpful to me throughout my stay at Norway, which I left on February 4, 1837.

Wearing my snowshoes and accompanied by my two guides, liberally supplied with excellent provisions for the crossing of upper Lake Winnipeg, I set out in



The St Boniface mission and cathedral. Morin reached his destination here on 13 February 1837 after a journey of some 1,000 kilometres. The cathedral had been completed by 1837 except for the spires, which were still under construction when Finlay made this sketch in 1847.

very favourable weather (5 degrees below Centigrade). We crossed Lake Pélé, separated from Lake Winnipeg by a narrow band of water called Mossy Point, which could be about 45 kilometres long.

Here is my record of the journey. On February 4, from Norway to Montreal Point on the south-east shore of Lake Winnipeg (48 kilometres). First camp. The 5th, second camp near the mouth of the Black River (106 kilometres). The 6th, we cross the mouth of the Poplar River for the third camp in a wooded area situated beyond Big Rock Point (156 kilometres). The 7th, we go around Point Mossy, cross the estuary of the Berens River and establish our fourth camp between Pigeon River and Catfish Creek (216 kilometres). The 8th, a blizzard which keeps us in camp for 24 hours. Fifth camp at Rabbit Point in dreadful cold (37 below zero) (265 kilometres). The 9th, after passing through the narrowest part of the lake, sixth camp in a well-sheltered spot opposite a little island close to the shore (317 kilometres). The 10th, still following the south-east side of the lake, we leave . . . [The name is left blank] Island on our right and set up our seventh camp on Big Island (359 kilometres). The 11th, the cold, the wind and the snow force us to camp a considerable distance back in the woods (406 kilometres). On the 12th, we press on to Deer Island, crossing the estuary of the beautiful Winnipeg River. From there, we go on to our ninth camp in a frozen marsh broken only by sparse bushes and stunted trees (450 kilometres). Finally, on the 13th, we camp in the delta of the Red River of the North, having covered 483 kilometres from Norway House to the head of Lake Winnipeg.

Lake Winnipeg lies in the centre of an immense plateau and all the large rivers which drain this plateau converge on it. They come from the east, the south, and the west and after having mingled their waters, flow out through a common channel to empty finally into Hudson's Bay.

Before sunrise, and after a substantial breakfast, we broke the tenth camp we had made since our departure to go up the main branch of the Red River delta. About three o'clock we reached the Stone Fort, 48 kilometres away, a journey which took nine hours.

The clerk in charge of the post welcomed me most effusively. My two guides, after being generously fortified, continued on their way to announce my arrival at the Stone Fort and to say that I would be at the St Boniface mission in a few hours.

After spending a very pleasant hour with this amiable clerk, I was supplied with a vehicle whose construction and shape attracted my close attention. It was a sleigh, mounted on runners, the first I had seen. I said good-bye to my generous host, expressing the hope that I would see him again soon, and got into this elegant, light conveyance, driven by an Orkney man who politely refused the seat that I offered him beside me, 'because' he said in good French, 'long-rein drivers always go on foot when the snow is hard and on snowshoes when it's soft.' Three and a half hours later, we had covered the 32 kilometres separating the Fort from the mission and my exuberant guide left me at the bishop's residence in St Boniface.

I must not forget to say that at each point of land on the river there was a big fire burning accompanied by a loud volley of gunfire and greetings and expressions of welcome from the Canadians and the Métis. I shall always remember passing through the midst of all these good folk, who knew that I was bringing news of France. [It was February 13, 1837.] ◆

Ballad of the Arctic

Across the Mary River
there's a mountain made of iron
the oil rigs drill near Tuktoyaktuk
from artificial islands

At Aklavik and Inuvik
the break-up roars in spring
the fractured sky is upside down
with northern lights for witness

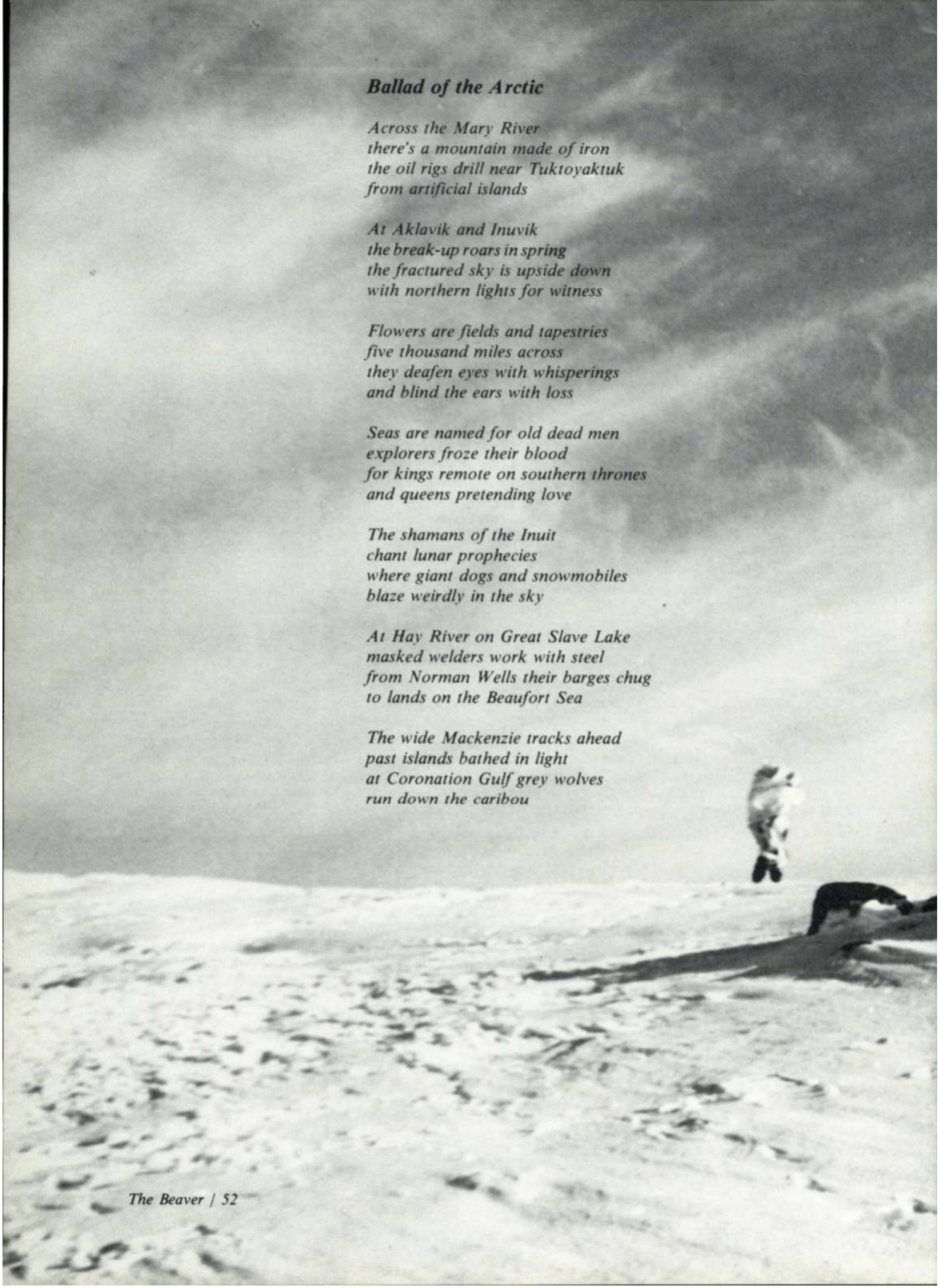
Flowers are fields and tapestries
five thousand miles across
they deafen eyes with whisperings
and blind the ears with loss

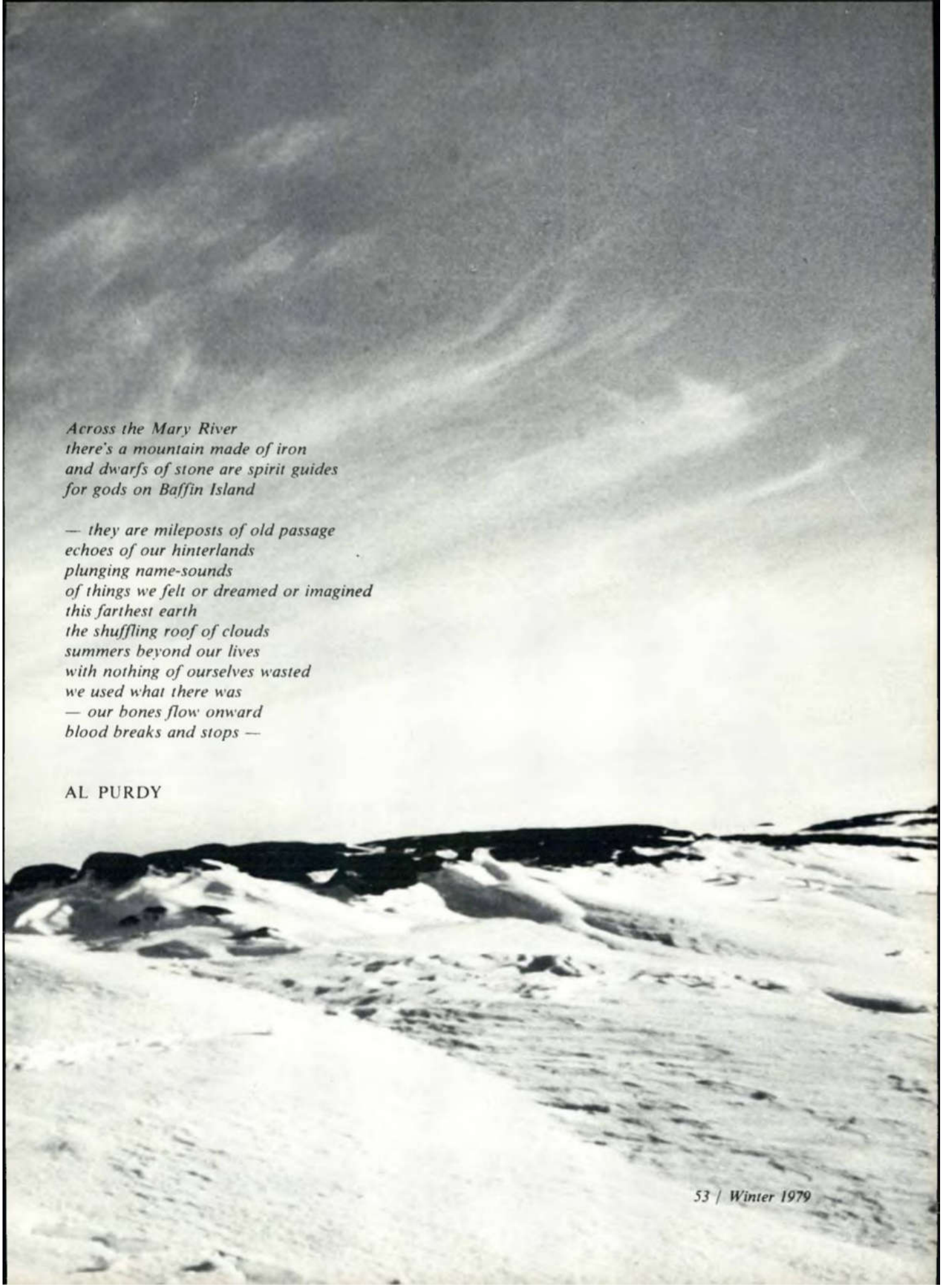
Seas are named for old dead men
explorers froze their blood
for kings remote on southern thrones
and queens pretending love

The shamans of the Inuit
chant lunar prophecies
where giant dogs and snowmobiles
blaze weirdly in the sky

At Hay River on Great Slave Lake
masked welders work with steel
from Norman Wells their barges chug
to lands on the Beaufort Sea

The wide Mackenzie tracks ahead
past islands bathed in light
at Coronation Gulf grey wolves
run down the caribou



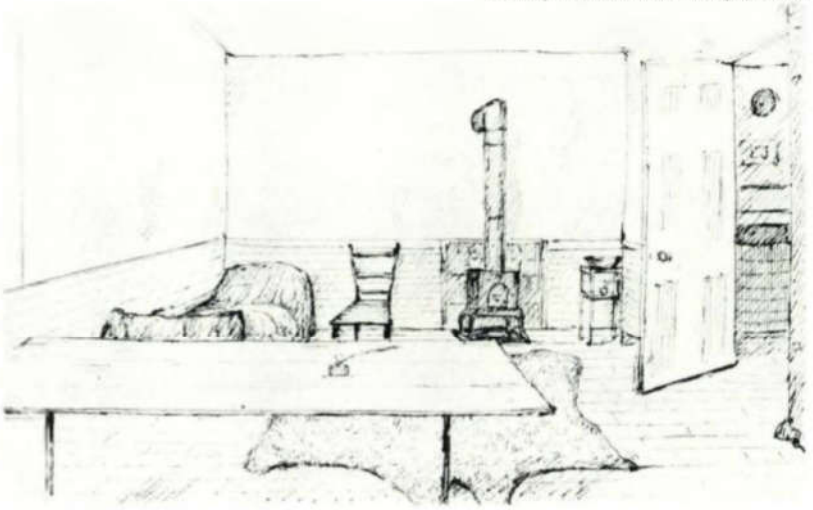


Across the Mary River
there's a mountain made of iron
and dwarfs of stone are spirit guides
for gods on Baffin Island

— they are mileposts of old passage
echoes of our hinterlands
plunging name-sounds
of things we felt or dreamed or imagined
this farthest earth
the shuffling roof of clouds
summers beyond our lives
with nothing of ourselves wasted
we used what there was
— our bones flow onward
blood breaks and stops —

AL PURDY

Courtesy of Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta



View of a room, presumably in Upper or Lower Fort Garry, c. 1846, showing a Canada stove as source of heat. Sketch by G. E. Finlay.

Canada Stoves in Rupert's Land

By Gordon Moat

The author, a material culture researcher whose specialty is metals, developed his interest in Carron stoves at York Factory while with Parks Canada, Prairie Region. He is now completing graduate studies in computer sciences at Carleton University.

Quotations from its Archives by permission of the Hudson's Bay Company.

MOST of the Hudson's Bay Company posts built on Hudson Bay during the eighteenth century were heated by open-hearth fireplaces. Elsewhere, in Europe and the North American colonies, stoves were proving more efficient than fireplaces. They enabled the heat source to be moved away from the wall toward the centre of the room to radiate heat in all directions. Initial distrust of an enclosed fire soon gave way to the desire for smokeless heat provided by stoves whose pipes effectively carried the smoke away.

Only a few stoves, for use by a Company officer or in a ship's cabin, were shipped from London to North America by the Hudson's Bay Company during the eighteenth century. The increasing popularity of stoves after 1820 is reflected by more and more frequent records of stoves in the inventories made at the posts. Incoming shipments of a dozen or more were common each year after 1829. Some of these stoves were used at York Factory, while the balance were sent to the other posts in Rupert's Land which included all areas of North America whose rivers drained into Hudson Bay.

Various early types of stoves were used but the popularity of one, called the Canada stove, soon surpassed all others. The single Canada stove consisted of a rectangular firebox formed by six cast-iron plates, with a smoke hole and a fuel door. A second model, the double Canada stove, had an oven set on top of the regular firebox. This required eleven plates plus an internal hood to enclose the oven to keep smoke from the fire away from the items being baked. Both models came in various sizes based on the length, in inches, of the firebox. Invoices for cargo shipped to York Factory from London indicate that the Hudson's Bay Company preferred 24-inch, 30-inch and 36-inch single stoves and the 36-inch-long double stoves.

These stoves were especially serviceable in the frontier environment of Rupert's Land because of their simplicity of form and construction; the plates could easily be taken apart for transportation in flat bundles. There were no nuts or bolts to lose; the plates were grooved along their edges to fit closely together and held in place by gravity. A blacksmith could easily make stove-pipes as necessary by rolling sheet iron into

cylinders and using rivets to hold the edges together.

At York Factory care of the cast-iron stoves was an integral part of the blacksmith's routine. Journals for 1843-44 indicate 'The Blacksmith cleaned the Stove Funnels [pipes] of the winter Houses' on 7 October and subsequently on the first Saturday of each winter month including May 1844, when the 'Blacksmith and assistant cleaned the funnels of the Factory'. The stoves were not always used year round, thus the blacksmith was also 'employed putting up a stove in the men's cooking room' on 16 December 1843. In October 1844, 'E. Smith [the blacksmith at York Factory] set up a stove in the winter Kitchen' indicating that separate summer and winter cooking facilities were in use. Many years later an inventory for 1899 lists 14 Canada second-hand stoves, 2 coal, 1 coal cooking and 2 wood cooking stoves in use. Only '3 [of these were] permanently in use in all' which shows that heating the buildings in summer was considered unnecessary at York Factory.

Canada stoves were made by foundries such as the St Maurice Ironworks near Three Rivers in present-day Quebec, and several iron works near Falkirk and Dundee in Scotland. Six-plate stoves were made as early as 1752 at St Maurice while the Carron Company was not in operation at Falkirk until December 1760. Marcel Moussette, a Parks Canada researcher in material culture, has studied the operation and products of both foundries. He suggests Canada stoves were first made at St Maurice and later copied in Scotland which may explain in part the origin of the name 'Canada' used by the Scottish foundries. Decorative patterns cast on the plates are very similar for stoves from each manufacturer.

Today we are more and more concerned with the availability of fuel for our heating systems. Fuel for the Canada stove was, in most instances, as close as the nearby forest. Firewood was not as great a worry as supply of the stove itself. Indeed, obtaining a stove was a major feat, considering how many breaks could, and did, occur in the supply chain.

Most of the stoves that reached York Factory or inland posts like Lower Fort Garry on the Red River did not come overland from foundries in one of the Canadas but by sea from London warehouses. Difficult communications made supply of the North American posts dependent on careful timing and luck.

Each year the supply ship arrived at York Factory in August or early September. Goods and supplies ordered the previous year were unloaded while the fur bales were loaded for England. A special packet containing the indent or order of supplies for the following years and other important documents was given to the ship's captain just before the ship set sail on the return voyage. The inland posts prepared their own orders for goods earlier in the summer or spring and forwarded them to York Factory to be consolidated into one large annual indent. A two-year supply of all essential goods was kept in stock at each depot — such as York Factory, Moose Factory and Fort Vancouver — to guard against the possibility that misfortune might strike the annual ship, preventing or delaying its arrival.

One attempt was made at the Red River Settlement to send an additional order for stoves between annual ships. The letter, dated 10 January 1843, travelled overland from Red River to reach Lachine, Quebec by late March. It was forwarded to a London-bound ship in Halifax and arrived at the Hudson's Bay Company office in London just before the annual ship sailed for York Factory in June. Unfortunately, 'there was not sufficient time between the receipt of the Additional Requisition for Lower Red River and the departure of the Ship for Hudson's Bay to have the Carron stoves made and sent from the country; consequently the 20 Cwt of sheet Iron [for stove-pipes] ordered at the same time has not been sent.' The settlers at Red River had to wait patiently until 1844 for this order to be filled.

Orders for goods were generally placed with traditional suppliers between November and January by the London Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company. Quantities were ordered as per the indent received from York Factory and special notes regarding quality, material or patterns might be included. Delivery was expected the following March or early April giving the supplier ample time to process the order. Many suppliers were wholesale agents depending on manufacturers in the British Isles and sometimes, from the continent. A March delivery also gave the Company an opportunity to recheck the goods received against the indents and make last-minute orders if necessary before the ship sailed for Hudson Bay in late May or June.

The supplier of Canada stoves from the 1830s through to the 1860s was Jukes Coulson and Company. This firm dealt in general hardware, handling stoves made in Scotland by the Carron Company. Coulson probably bought Canada stoves from the firm of Adam and Wiggins who ran Carron's London warehouse. The Carron stoves seem to have been temporarily out of stock in 1843 which forced a special order directly to the foundry near Falkirk. As noted above there was not enough time available to cast the stoves ordered and send them to London to catch the ship.

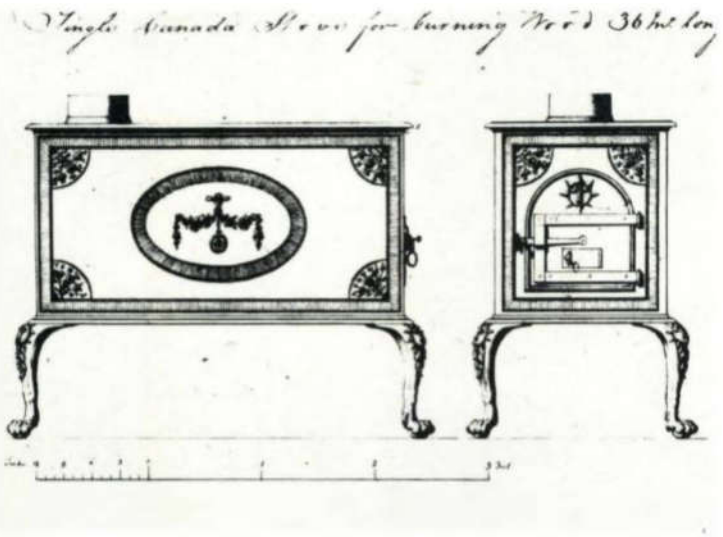
Supplies for York Factory left London in June 1843 on board the *Prince Rupert*. The invoice lists:

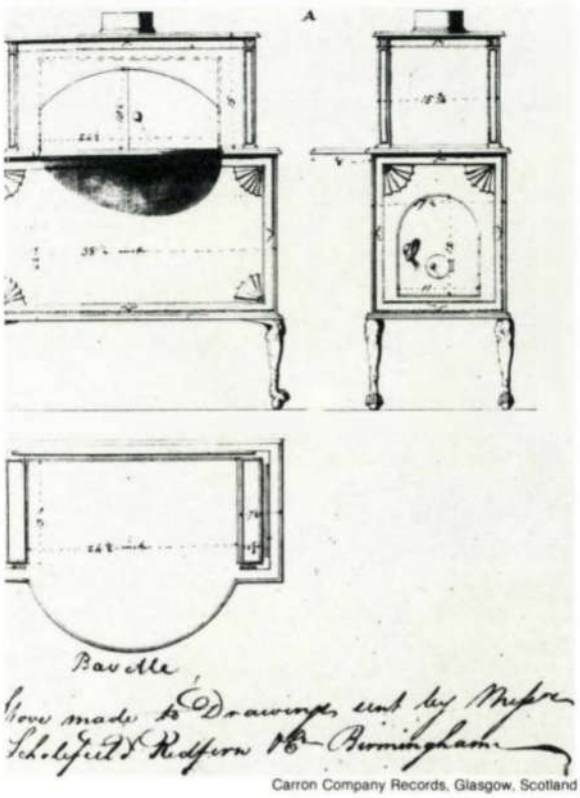
1 Strong 24 inch Single Canada Stove
1 do 30 " do do do

consigned to York Factory. For Red River [Lower Fort Garry] there were:

3 Strong 36 in Single Canada Stoves
8 do 30 " " " "
5 do 24 " " " "
19 Bdles best best SC Scrap Iron Doubles 60 x 24 in for Stove Pipes

A single Canada stove (below) that took logs 36 inches long; and a double Canada stove showing the side and end views and the plan of the base of the oven with rectangular vents at each end for the passage of smoke.





Carron Company Records, Glasgow, Scotland

Obviously the Red River indent made the previous year had not totally neglected Canada stoves. Invoices for 1844 and 1845 list 20 and 69 Canada stoves respectively while numbers had dropped to eight per year in 1846-47. The unusually large quantity arriving in 1845 was ordered to heat the barracks for troops who arrived in the Red River Settlement in 1846.

In 1843 the *Prince Rupert* arrived at York Factory on 12 August dropping anchor at Five Fathom Hole. The Hayes River was too shallow to sail up to the Factory itself, hence the anchorage at the mouth of the river. Small vessels used for sailing along the coast of Hudson Bay were pressed into service to ferry supplies to shore and carry London-bound furs to the *Prince Rupert*.

Supplies were stored in a large two-storey depot building at York Factory until a brigade of York boats travelling inland could take goods to the appropriate posts. Normally the brigades came down to the Bay with furs in the summer before the ship arrived from England. If their return voyage up the Hayes (and for some, ultimately the Saskatchewan, Churchill, Athabasca or even Mackenzie Rivers) was lengthy they would be forced to leave before the arrival of the supply ship. In these instances, the supplies they carried had already been waiting in storage at York Factory for almost a year.

T. McDermot departed from York Factory with six York boats bound for the Red River Settlement in July 1843. The cargo was divided so that each boat carried seventy-five pieces but each item was also divided between boats. For instance, boat No 4 with John McNab as steersman carried '3 Bundles Sundries 1 Stove 2 ft.' amongst its cargo as did the fifth boat in the charge of Alexis McKay. The miscellaneous bundles carried by George Morgan's boat included a two-and-a-half-foot stove. Loading the supplies in this manner meant that if one boat met with misadventure at least some of the stoves would reach Red River.

Numerous records have been located in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives referring to the Canada stoves at York Factory and Red River. Less frequent references indicate they were also used at Churchill, Severn, Albany, Trout Lake, Moose River, Fort Qu'Appelle, Fort Vancouver and even in the Mackenzie District. Specimens of complete plates and fragments have been discovered through archaeological investigations at York Factory, Lower Fort Garry (Red River), Churchill and Moose Factory.

Archaeologists working at York Factory in the summer of 1978 recognized parts of a minimum of 14 Canada stoves including a 36-inch double stove. The decorative patterns on these stove plates represent a

Chris Grant, Parks Canada

A 36" single Canada stove manufactured by the Carron Company at Falkirk, Scotland, and now in the clerk's office in the Big House at Lower Fort Garry.

selected portion of the patterns found in nineteenth century pattern books kept by the Carron Company. Their trademark 'Carron' occurred on all but one of the plates, and even in this case the decoration was identical to the Carron pattern. This predominance of Carron products indicates why Hudson's Bay Company servants through most of the nineteenth century used 'Carron' and 'Canada' interchangeably to refer to this particular type of box stove.

Complete Canada stoves were still present at Lower Fort Garry when the post became a Canadian National Historic Site in 1951. Today visitors to Lower Fort Garry may view single Canada stoves in the elegantly furnished rooms of the Big House. Their suitability for heating and cooking on the frontier of Rupert's Land has been assumed. They burned wood which was the closest fuel at hand; they were sturdy yet could easily be disassembled for transport — an advantage in situations of shipment overseas and many inland portages. This group of stoves was also the Carron Company's best quality and most stylish line of box stoves, their deluxe models. Indeed, in the 1790s the Carron Company suggested to potential customers that they view the double Canada stove in no less a place than Parliament House in London. ◆

JOHN BRACKEN
A Political Biography

By John Kendle. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1979. 318 pp., illus. $17.50.

Reviewed by Senator Duff Roblin

It was on a bitter February morning when John Bracken was in his fifteenth year as Premier of Manitoba that I first had occasion to meet him. My grandfather was being buried and it was in connection with some part of the funeral arrangements that my father went to call on John Bracken in his office in the Manitoba Legislative Building, taking me with him. We were ushered without delay into Mr Bracken's imposing office. He came from behind an enormous desk to greet us. I vividly recall my impressions on meeting a man who seemed austere and reserved but at the same time projected a considerate and curiously warm understanding of a family's mingled concern and grief. He listened and gave quick approval to my father's requests. He sent us away satisfied and grateful.

Inevitably, Dr Kendle's biography showed me less of John Bracken, the man, than I would have wished. With only the most public of papers available as source material and apparently with scanty input from John Bracken's political associates, friend or foe, the difficulty of striking through to the human being behind the record is somewhat formidable. The description of his early life is indeed illuminating and gives a solid feeling of the background from which John Bracken came. But after assuming the premiership the man himself seems to retire into the background while the narrative of evidence takes over.

Nevertheless, that narrative makes a first-rate contribution to the political history of Manitoba. Coming from a political family, I can recall as a youngster some of the highlights of the Bracken premiership, though seen through the veil of opposing political opinion. So it is only right to observe that the favourable construction Dr Kendle puts on the general course of the policies of the Bracken Government is well documented and convincing.

The financial policies followed seem a little harsh now, as indeed they did then, but they were certainly consistent with the times. The agricultural, hydro-electric and development policies can be fairly described as 'progressive conservative'. It is in the area of party politics, however, that one feels at once the strengths and the weaknesses of the Bracken system. John Bracken seems to have had little feeling for or real understanding of the genius of the Westminster parliamentary system as applied in a Canadian legislature. The concept of the parliamentary arena — as being the place in which the clash of men and the clash of ideas can originate, develop and refine public policy and advance the public interest — never appealed to him, although he made brilliant use of the attractions of 'non partisan' government in maintaining a firm hold on power in Manitoba. As the residuary legatee of the prairie progressive movement (based as it was on the rural constituency) and facing a much divided multi-party legislature, he was well positioned to use 'non partisan' politics as a means to move toward an effective coalition government. But this very success of such a system on the provincial political scene proved to be his nemesis when he was persuaded to move to federal politics.

This was indeed sad, for John Bracken had much to offer Canada. He was one of the first public men to understand the need to realign federal and provincial constitutional responsibilities with federal and provincial fiscal resources. He foresaw the possibility and capacity of the federal system to equalize more fairly the economic disparities of the various regions. He had a strong feeling for the need to strengthen the moral tone of society and bring greater public understanding to public affairs. But he did not seem to understand how the parliamentary party system could be used to advance those great objectives of the nation. His formula for success in Manitoba almost guaranteed his failure on the national scene. Dr Kendle sets forth well and clearly the essential hubris of this situation.

I knew John Bracken best after he had left the leadership of the Progressive Conservative party. His husky voice, piercing gaze, strong handshake and the powerful impact of his personality were with him in his old age and not to be forgotten by any who knew him. His changing of the name of the Conservative party to the Progressive Conservative party was not merely an idiosyncratic gesture but prophetic of the changing ideology of the party itself. John Diefenbaker was to confirm it. Bracken's record in ascending to the premiership of a province by the invitation of his peers and to the leadership of a national party by entreaty of a convention is surely unique in parliamentary history. Dr Kendle's explication of John Bracken's place in the history of Manitoba and the nation is a pleasure to read and a fine contribution to Canada's story.

Senator Duff Roblin is former leader of the Progressive Conservative party in Manitoba and a former premier of the province. He was summoned to the Senate of Canada in 1978.

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AN ARCTIC MAN
Sixty-five Years in Canada's North

By Ernie Lyall. Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, 1979. 239 pp., illus. $12.95.

Reviewed by W. A. Tolboom

This autobiography by Ernie Lyall, a 65-year veteran of the Canadian North, is long overdue. Goaded by a succession of arctic books — everything from scholarly discourses by visiting sociologists to half-truths by fiction writers who go north for brief periods — Mr Lyall has finally decided to speak up. Humbly claiming not to be a writer, he made a series of tapes which became this book.

Mr Lyall wastes no time in getting down to the facts. Contrary to some things that have been written about him, he states that he has no Eskimo blood in his veins — but would be proud if he had. He was born of British parentage and raised in Labrador. His Scottish grandfather had been a cooper with the Hudson's Bay Company and his father was a trader for the Moravians. In 1927, at the age of seventeen, he, too, joined the Hudson's Bay Company and sailed into arctic seas on the famous old ship *Nascopie*.

A fascinating tale of adventure unwinds as the author quickly proves to be a fine story teller. He is careful to explain that he refers to the people of the North as Eskimos rather than Inuit, which is more commonly used today, for the same reason that he has not come to grips with metric measure. He is not used to it yet. Thus, with an engaging sense of humour and simple clarity Ernie Lyall's stories unfold at Lake Harbour, Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay and at Spence Bay where he still resides. He tells of arduous dog-team journeys, starvation, mercy killings, childbirth, the shamans and almost every facet of life in the North. He speaks his thoughts on the penetration of the Eskimo way of life by the people of the 'outside' world. With good judgement, he discusses schooling and medical services.

Although for the betterment of his family Ernie Lyall left the Company to take a job with the federal government, the two great loyalties of his life emerge throughout the book. The first is to Nipisha, his Inuit wife of forty-two years, and the second is to the Hudson's Bay Company. He understands the Inuit because he has come to think like one. His greatest honour came in 1941 when he, a white man, was given the first Eskimo number in his area of the Eastern Arctic census — E5-1.

Readers will enjoy this book, for the author has no axe to grind. It is an enthralling armchair tale which rings with sincerity whether Mr Lyall is talking about his family of eleven children or discussing native land rights. He is sad for the passing of the old ways and fears for the preservation of the language and culture of his people; but he has accepted change with sound common sense, as he has faced all else that life has offered. *An Arctic Man* is a satisfying book. If the reader is a little more knowledgeable when he finishes it, Ernie Lyall will be happy.

Wulf Tolboom's long association with the Arctic began in 1941 as an HBC clerk at Povungnetuk, Québec. He was 13 years at northern posts and maintained contact with them by plane after his transfer to Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg.

CHAUTAUQUA IN CANADA

By Sheilagh S. Jameson. Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, 1979. 161 pp., illus. $12.50.

Reviewed by Malvina Bolus

One of the phenomena unique to the culture of North America was Chautauqua. Deriving its name from the town in New York State where it started, mainly as a training centre for Sunday-school teachers, it developed into an educational and entertainment program that spread throughout the West. High standards were always maintained in its assemblage of musicians, singers, entertainers, actors, and speakers — known to Chautauquans by the unfortunate title of 'talent' — as well as the recruitment and training of personnel. The calibre of speakers attested to its prestige, ranging from bishops to Ada Ward who had entertained the troops in France; from President Woodrow Wilson to Vilhjalmur Stefansson.

Having proved its success in the western United States, the Chautauqua idea was introduced to Canada in 1916. This was a bold venture, when Canada was at war, instigated by John M. Erickson who set up headquarters in Calgary and eventually operated nine circuits. After 40 towns had been booked the first Canadian circuit started in May 1917 at Mission, B.C. A circuit was a tour of perhaps 50 or more settlements and towns, lasting from May to September in six-day stands in a huge brown canvas tent. A few circuits had shorter stands, and were sometimes followed by Fall Festivals of two days each. This happening came at a time when settlers were hungry for

Ernie Lyall inside the HBC store at Spence Bay, 1962. Left to right: Napachee, daughters Barbara and Kathy Lyall, Ernie Lyall and store manager Ralph Knight.

Photograph by George Hunter for the HBC

relief from setting up homesteads, breaking the prairie, living in isolated communities, and coping without modern equipment with everyday problems and loneliness.

Drought and depression in the thirties heralded the decline of the Chautauquas, and the advent of cars, better roads, radios and movies hastened that decline. Citizens were no longer prepared to make bookings, that is, guarantee a certain number of seat sales or pay the deficit. In the United States Chautauqua had faded away in the 1920s and the last Canadian circuit was run in 1935, after which the Ericksons returned to the United States.

In preparing this account with her usual thoroughness and care, Sheilagh Jameson, Chief Archivist at the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, had the collaboration of Nola B. Erickson. Mrs Erickson had been a partner with her husband in running the companies and had herself been everything from booker to lecturer, editor to trainer of staff, to manager. She had intended to write a book about Chautauqua but when this became impossible she willingly passed the task to Ms Jameson and made available the papers and reminiscences she had collected.

The chapters with stories of performers and details of the work of Chautauqua staff are the most lively; elsewhere there is sometimes a tendency to lecture on the greatness of Chautauqua rather than let points made speak for themselves. The part played by women on the staff was remarkable. In the days when nice girls were brought up not to speak to strangers, young university women of good family were enlisted to travel alone to strange towns, introduce themselves to leading citizens, set up committtees (nearly always male) and establish financial commitments to cover the following year's 'Six Joyous Days' presented by the company. Chautauqua respectability was unquestioned.

This book may tell you more than you wanted to know about Chautauquas and it is, with reason, mainly concerned with the West, with slight coverage of the lesser activities in Ontario and Quebec. But as a segment of social history it is a valuable record: well written, researched in depth, documented, annotated, with bibliography and index. The many illustrations set the almost-forgotten scene of a past generation and show many of the people involved.

Malvina Bolus is the former editor of 'The Beaver'.

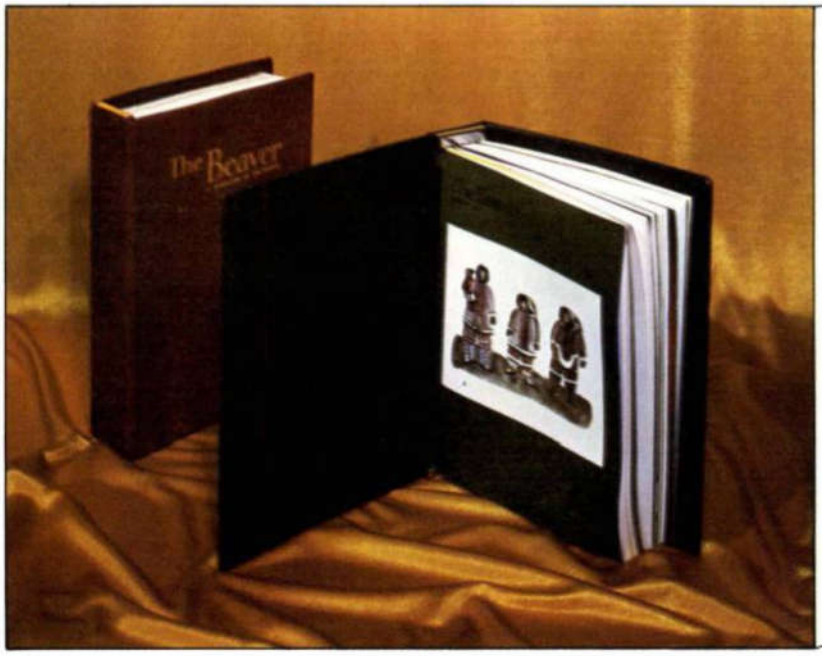
COAST OF MANY FACES

By Ulli Steltzer and Catherine Kerr. Douglas & McIntyre Publishers, Vancouver, 1979. 212 pp., illus. $29.95.

Reviewed by Lillian B. Allen

This is primarily a book of photography, but not in colour. The duotone black and white photographs serve to express the unusual atmosphere of the locale of this book, the coast and islands of British Columbia. This tremendous area, comprising 14,000 square miles, is completely different from any other coastal region of North America. For thousands of years Indian people have made this land of mountains, forests and rivers, and the sea and its inlets their home. The sea has provided a means of communication, and with its rich bounty, sustenance for their well-being. With its tides it has controlled their daily lives. The ancestors of the present-day Indians listened to the sounds they heard in the forests and in the world around them, and based their chants on these same sounds. Their myths and beliefs go back to the spirits who thus spoke to them.

For much of the time this land is veiled in mists, and always close by are the rains that have made the



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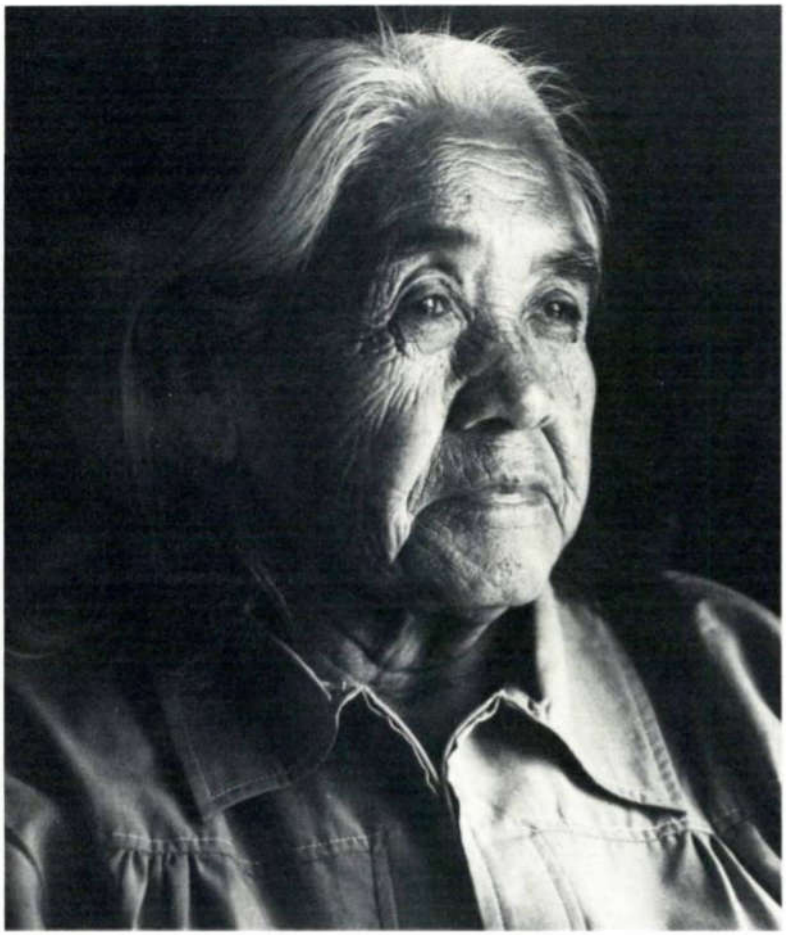

Mary Hopkins at Klemtu. A photograph by Ulli Steltzer from 'Coast of Many Faces'.

forests lush and the resources bountiful. This has been captured in the sensitive and beautiful photography of Ulli Steltzer who came to America from Europe some years ago. She has photographed native people in other areas, has specialized in portrait work, and now lives on the West Coast close to her subjects for this book.

We who have travelled on the West Coast and ferried to the more familiar islands, have seen something of the mists and rain as well as the sun. Those of us who attempt to take photographs are aware of the special light effects that only this climate can create. We, particularly, can experience what Ulli Steltzer has accomplished.

But people are her main interest. She has photographed not only Indian people, but the white people who have chosen to make this land their land. There is a Rembrandt-like portrait of Mary Hopkins at Klemtu, and a portrait of Fred Letts of Oona River with the details of his life and work around him, much in the manner of the Flemish painters of centuries ago. Most of these people illustrated are shown at work; and this further explains without words their environment.

The text, written by Catherine Kerr, is easy to read, and much of it is in the actual words of the people photographed. This helps to maintain the mood of the book. Through these short descriptions and quotations we learn of the past, but much more about how people, both native and newcomers, are coping with their surroundings today where both living and working conditions are still in great part controlled by the elements of nature itself.

The text tells of the changes that have taken place and are taking place due to over-fishing and over-logging. Now there is pollution in some areas. In the struggle to restore the natural riches of sea and land, the people, often with government help, are using technology itself to combat the problems originally caused by technology. There are even hopes of maintaining wilderness areas so our descendants can experience clean waters and great forests with centuries-old trees.

We see totem-pole carvers at work recreating that unique craft where the design begins with the careful choice of a fine cedar tree. All early carving had a purpose in the lives and rituals of the original

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people. We get more than a hint of different Indian bands, where they live, and what they have had to cope with, such as the power of the sea, and an often formidable land. The environment has moulded their character, art and culture.

At the beginning of the book there is a double-page spread of two easy-to-read maps: one of the northern coast, and one of the southern coast. These show very clearly the location of every town and hamlet mentioned. In an instant we can locate Kingcome Inlet, Alert Bay, Bella Bella or Kyuquot. The authors visited over fifty communities. The jacket design with the portrait of Sam Webber and his daughter of Kingcome invites us to explore the book.

This book is a fine addition to the library of coastal dweller and inland resident alike.

Photographer Lillian Allen is now retired associate professor of housing and design in the home economics faculty at the University of Manitoba.

ALBERTA / A CELEBRATION

Stories by Rudy Wiebe, photographs by Harry Savage, edited by Tom Radford. Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, 1979. 208 pp., illus. $29.95.

Reviewed by John de Visser

This volume of stories and colour photography was commissioned by the Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Limited in celebration of Alberta's 75th anniversary.

Rudy Wiebe's stories are delightful, friendly and intimate — the kind of stories that make you feel good just for reading them. In the process they convey a sense of the place where they occur, which is, of course, the purpose of the book.

The photographs are a somewhat different matter. There are some excellent ones. I particularly like the straightforward portraits: Mrs Louise Cardinal, Winnie and Thomas Wasateneau and Joe Large of Saddle Lake. But the landscapes, which are all-important in a book like this, too frequently lack the colour they should have. Having been personally involved in projects of this kind I suspect that in some cases the quality of the reproduction is at fault. There seems to be an overall purple-blue cast to the colour quality of the entire book. Nevertheless, there are too many photographs which were taken at the wrong time of day, or in less than desirable light.

The book is pleasant enough however and even though I am a 'dreaded Easterner', may I say that the work does point out how great Alberta, and therefore Canada, is.

Photographer John de Visser's books include 'Pioneer Churches' (with Harold Kalman), 'Rivers of Canada' (with Hugh MacLennan), and 'Winter' (with Morley Callaghan).

PIONEERS, PEDLARS, AND PRAYER SHAWLS

The Jewish Communities in British Columbia and the Yukon

By Cyril Edel Leonoff for the Jewish Historical Society of British Columbia. Sono Nis Press, Victoria, 1978. 255 pp., illus. $15.00.

Reviewed by A. J. Arnold

This book is no more and no less than what its author suggests it to be, a 'collection of photographs . . . with accompanying commentary.' The best that can be said about it is that Cyril Leonoff has done a great deal of work in adding to the available research material, and particularly to the pictorial sources, on the history of the Jews in British Columbia.

As the founding president of the Jewish Historical Society of British Columbia in 1971, and now the society's archivist, Leonoff has gathered new material from remote parts of British Columbia and the Yukon to add to the pictorial collection begun in Vancouver in 1958 by the B.C. Jewish Centennial Committee. The photos and commentaries are presented in 25 chapters ranging from Victoria to the Yukon and from pioneers in medicine to pioneers in the arts, and everything is well documented.

Most of the commentaries however are little more than enlarged photo captions, and their calibre is really not much better than one might find in a small-town weekly newspaper extolling the achievements of its local citizens.

The presentation of the material moreover, becomes disconcerting at times. The captions are numbered but the photos are not. The reader may therefore expect to find each caption directly below, above or alongside the photo it describes. Unfortunately this is not the case.

On page 45, for example, caption No 37 is on Simon Reinhardt, Jewish pioneer of the Lower Mainland, but Reinhardt's photo appears at the bottom of the next page after two more captions. On page 47 there is a photo of a group of women with caption No 40 directly below it reading: 'Pacific Pine Co. Ltd., Queensborough, New Westminster' and a commentary about Jews in the lumber business. The caption on the women. No. 39: 'Royal City Hadassah', appears on the preceding page, while the Pacific Pine industrial photo is on the following page.

Since this is a picture book which many readers will take for browsing rather than serious reading it would have been very useful if a number corresponding to the appropriate caption had been placed directly on each photo.

It is also necessary to challenge one vital fact presented in this book, namely that the Jewish population of B.C. has grown to 12,000 'in the present decade' (p. 213). This is based on 1971 ethnic origin census figures.

The figures on Jews by ethnic origin have always differed from the figures on Jews by religion, and the 1971 census gave British Columbia just 9,700. The 1971 census recorded over 20,000 more Jews by ethnic origin than by religion in all of Canada. The 20,000 who were not Jews by religion included more than 10,000 who listed themselves as Anglicans, United Church, Catholic or of some other religious denomination, and the remainder said they had no religion.

It is therefore logical to assume that the 9,700 Jews by religion is much closer to the real total of the population of the Jewish community in British Columbia, in spite of the growth in numbers that will surely show up in the next census.

Mr Arnold is co-author with the late William Kurelek of 'Jewish Life in Canada'.

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